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NAPOLEON

OUR LAST GREAT MAN

ELYSTAN M. BEARDSLEY

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NAPOLEON

"Napoleon . . . our last Great Man!"

Carlyle.

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Napoleon

NAPOLEON

OUR LAST GREAT MAN

BY

ELYSTAN M.
BEARDSLEY

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PREFACE

THIS little book is not a biography or even a history, but consists merely of reflections on the various phases of Napoleon's extraordinary career up to the pageant of Dresden, the highest point of power ever attained by man.

I confess that my admiration for Napoleon is boundless. To me Bonaparte is the greatest human prodigy, the most stupendous intellectual force the world has ever known. At the same time my admiration for the great Corsican has not blinded me to his many shortcomings. That these were numerous is undeniable, that many of them were even infamous is alas! too true, but then we must remember that from nothingness Napoleon attained to an altitude of power never reached before or since by mortal.

In a man such as he we can hardly expect the virtues of a saint. Can Alexander or Cæsar be called virtuous men? A giant like Napoleon cannot be judged by the standard by which ordinary men are judged. What would be a nefarious action in other men would only be an expedient in him.

An impression exists among English people that of all nations Napoleon hated England the most genuinely. This idea, however, I do not share. I firmly believe, whatever other writers may think on the subject that, up to 1808 at all events, nothing was nearer Napoleon's wishes than friendly relations with his great insular enemy. His repeated overtures towards her are a proof of this. At the same time there is no doubt that after England's reiterated refusal to negotiate with him he ardently desired her ruin, but that he was imbued with more enmity towards England than towards other nations I do not believe. England's invulnerable position no doubt incited Napoleon into the committal of the most

extravagant measure of hostility on record throughout the whole course of history, namely, the Continental System, which has made his animosity appear more virulent than really was the case.

In these pages I have dwelt upon this point, and have endeavoured to explain that Napoleon's so-called intense hatred of England is a mistaken idea.

I have expatiated somewhat upon Napoleon's relations with the Vatican, and have closed these "reflections" with the pageant of Dresden, the most extraordinary and sublime period throughout the whole course of man's career. I cannot help being surprised that historians have not dwelt more fully upon this epoch of Napoleon's astounding career.

I hope these pages may prove of interest to students of Napoleon's character as well as to readers of Napoleonic literature. If this is the case my wishes will be amply gratified.

JULY 14, 1907.

BOOK I

"THE MAN"

"He was known in France not as General, or Consul, or even Emperor, or even by his name, but simply as 'The Man.'"—*Lord Rosebery.*

WHY does Napoleon fascinate us, why does his name lend scope to the imagination? Because he is so multifarious, so bountiful in mind and action; so salient, so luminous, so inexhaustible. Having accomplished so much, nothing seems beyond the compass of his possibilities; the world when face to face with him seems to contract, seems under the spell of his titanic intellect.

* * * *

He is everywhere. Europe all dotted with his victories is his manœuvre camp. His activity is never localised; he enters all the capitals of Europe and thence dictates to kings and emperors. He fights his battles in all lands, finds no obstacle in man or nature to his onward march. At his behest mountains shrink and rivers roll back their waters, as it were. He scales the Alps with his artillery, leads his army across the desert

bridges the Danube in the face of the enemy. Palaces are his headquarters, his high tribunals; Schoenbrunn, Sans-souci, the Kremlin, so many resting-places, where only God's anointed rest.

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We see him as in a dream mesmerising the kingdoms of the earth into submission.

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His career is full of variety, so prolific of contrasts. He fights his maiden battles in the plains of Italy. As by enchantment armies dissolve and coalitions crumble.

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His self-confidence never deserts him. During his passage of the Great Saint Bernard his hat is damaged by the storms that beset his march. This trivial mishap only helps to confirm his certainty of conquest by his assurance to his youthful guide of finding another in Italy.

* * * *

For him there is no discrimination

between desire and realisation—with him to wish means supreme possession.

From the obscurity of lieutenancy he rose, as by magic, to the dizziest heights of human power, raising France from a state of political chaos and unrest to the proud position of arbitress of Europe.

* * * *

His rapid rise to power, through obscurity and poverty, is unprecedented. He is General of Artillery at 24, and Lord of Italy at 27. It seems but the transition of a day from the miseries of penury, when we see him in the bare, cheerless little room at Auxonne, a solitary figure, poring over his treasured books, his eager, encyclopædic mind feasting voraciously on the history of antiquity, to the semi-regal splendour of Montebello and Passeriano.

We wonder if at times, in the solitude of his humble sanctum, ere Fortune had lavished upon him her smiles and favours, did visions of future renown and supremacy in Europe haunt the secret recesses of his impenetrable soul? Or, did he

foresee (when in command of the artillery of the Army of Italy, two years before his wonderful campaign of 1796–7), when for the first time he beheld the Alpine regions of Italy, that eleven years later the crown of the Lombard kings, united with the diadem of Imperial France, would encircle his brow?

* * * *

He sails for the Orient. In the Plain of Embabeh, where the immutable pyramids point to the sky, he evokes the Spirit of the Ages as witness of an army's heroism. He fords the Red Sea —marches into Syria for the conquest of the East, a dream, alas! never realised in its entirety. Before the walls of Acre he is brought to bay, his first reverse, that shatters all his hopes of an Asiatic Empire. He retreats into Egypt, sets sail for France, where he is hailed as a deliverer. He overthrows the Government—is proclaimed First Consul. Like a thunderbolt he falls upon the Austrians from the snowy defiles of the Great Saint

Bernard, and on the field of Marengo wrests Italy from Austria's grasp.

Yet the Consulship fails to cloy the world-embracing ambition of this enigmatical genius; he now aspires to still higher flights of omnipotence, and with the *sang-froid* of the conqueror we see him place the Imperial Diadem upon his brow, thus reviving, over the embers of the Revolution, Charlemagne's Empire of the West.

Now begins a succession of wars on a stupendous scale — a cataclysm, that overwhelms the impotent monarchies of Europe, whose tide rolls with unbridled fury from the Guadalquivir to the Dnieper.

He, like the genius of arbitrary war, impels its frenzied course; we see the world upheaved, we hear the crash of falling empires, the resonance of the blows dealt by the Titan at coalesced Europe—Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, Wagram, Borodino, Dresden, were the felling blows under which the universe oscillated.

* * * *

Then comes his fall, imprisonment and agonising death on the isle, immured in the wastes of the Atlantic ; the whole is replete with the grandeur of the tragedy that belongs to Greek mythology. His overthrow, that cost the world such a terrible effort, seems rather to enhance than lessen his greatness, for, if ever human might was tested to the utmost limit of its capabilities, then it assuredly was when Christendom banded itself in a crusade for his undoing.

* * * *

We have the harrowing story of his martyrdom and torture on the rock. Despite the lurid colouring which so hideously depicts his captivity and lingering death under the relentless tyranny of his despicable jailors, he seems, there in Saint Helena, in the lowering evening of his momentous life, if anything, perhaps greater than at any other period of his astounding career — his captors, beside him, appear like pigmies guarding a giant, scarce discernible in the empyreal blaze of his personality and genius.

Napoleon is so modern; he is so near to us; his greatness reaches out to us and affects us potently; the vigour of his personality still casts its spell upon us. It is not so long since his legions marched and counter-marched through Europe, since every hamlet from Calabria to Lithuania saw the watchfire of a French bivouac, since every goatherd from the Brocken to Mulhacen heard the measured beat of French drums, since the blare of French bugles echoed in every valley from Andalusia to Moravia, since his victorious banner waved over every capital between Moscow and Lisbon, since his artillery thundered at Borodino and Leipzig, since his cavalry charged on the Pratzenberg and over the field of Waterloo.

The great interest manifested in everything Napoleon ever did, be it for good or for evil, is due to his modernness combined with his prepollent genius—besides, he was a century ahead of the times. Is it therefore surprising that his wrongdoings loom forth with a sinister im-

minence, just as his extraordinary exploits still bewilder the intellect, that we are apt, owing to their flagrancy, to forget his many acts of magnanimity or the benificence to the world of some of his apparently most despotic deeds? We forget that if he conquered Italy it was only to infuse among her people a spirit of unity that eventually germinated into a liberty loving and united Italy, for in a great measure to Napoleon is due the present unification of Italy; that if he conquered Egypt it was only to lay the corner-stone of her present prosperity; that if he conquered Germany it was only to sweep from her face the cobwebs of mediæval institutions with his immortal Code, and by the weight of his depotism to unite all Germans into that mighty confederation of states, the present German Empire; that if he twice subjugated Austria he yet spared her from annihilation; that if he utterly shattered Prussia he yet allowed Frederick William to occupy the throne of the victor of Rosbach; that if he misled the Poles in their

hope of an autonomous government and shed their life-blood on many a battle-field, it was only to emancipate them from the hated yoke of Prussia and in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw to give them a foretaste of a regenerated independence. What greater magnanimity can be found anywhere than his conduct at Montebello towards the Comte d'Entraigues, whose arrest in Venice disclosed condemnatory evidence of his implication in the conspiracy of 18th Fructidor; than his generous treatment of Moreau, the associate of Pichgrue and Cadoual in the Royalist plot of 1804, and his future opponent in the plains of Saxony; or his noble conduct towards the Princess of Hatzsfeld at Berlin in 1806, whose intercession for her husband's life and despair upon the production of his incriminating letter to Hohenlohe moved him into pardoning the Prince and destroying the attestation of his treachery?

BOOK II

NAPOLEON AND THE ORIENT

"The East only wants a man. The master of Egypt is the master of India."—*Napoleon.*

PERHAPS no epoch in Napoleon's life is so intensely interesting or furnishes such an opportunity to analyse his character, philosophy, and religious opinions than that of his Egyptian expedition, for he is there under the seductive influence of the Orient, that ever since early days had deeply fascinated him and affected his imagination. What we here find, which is truly unique in the history of human nature, not without a tinge of the uncanny, and which the profoundest psychologist would study in vain for a solution, is the contact of the most stupendous intellectual riddle of modern times with the mysteries of the unsolvable East.

To what a degree he was influenced by the Orient is clearly shown in his conversations with Gourgaud, years later, in Saint Helena, when he expatiates largely on Mohammedanism, placing it above

Christianity, as being simpler and to him more convincing, seeing that it took considerably less time to propagate than the latter.

The Sheiks, moreover, seem to have made a deep impression upon him when they declared the followers of Christ to be little better than pagans in worshiping three deities.

Withal he professes himself a materialist, at least he affirms as much to Gourgaud and denies the Divinity of Christ, and yet he declares that he believes in a God. "Everything," he says, "proclaims the existence of a God. That cannot be questioned." Still he cannot reconcile himself to religion. All religions, he avers, are the invention of men. Why should there be so many? If the Christian religion is the true one, why has it not always existed? What, he asks, has become of all the virtuous men who have existed before its foundation? His own existence is beyond his comprehension, for he compares himself to a watch with all its works in motion but which is yet

unconscious of its existence. He attributes all religious dissensions to the fraud and falsehood of the priests, and his own scepticism with regard to religion in a great measure to their iniquity and rapacity. His opinions of a future state are clearly revealed at Elba, when he declared to Lord Ebrington, "*Nous ne savons d'ou nous venons, ne que nous deviendrons*": the admission, "*Je suis Catholique parceque mon père l'etait et parceque c'etait la religion de la France*," is nothing less than an avowal that choice had little to do with the fact that he was a Roman Catholic. This absence of a sense of religion in his acataleptic nature is imputable to the man's extraordinary force of character, the illimitable power he exercised over human destiny, and to his vast superiority over all other men. The blood-stained fields of sixty battles, with their myriads of dead and dying, exhibited to him life in its darkest and most hideous form, and, naturally enough, made him a sceptic and pessimist with regard to religion and a future state. At

Saint Helena he affirmed to Gourgaud that war and the continuous sight of the dead made him a materialist, that everything is matter and death ends all. His superhuman faculties, that raised him so immeasurably above the rest of mankind, his pre-eminence in war and statecraft, and in whatever conduced to accelerate the understanding, tended to alienate him from humanity and likewise from all religious affinities. That he estimated his greatness to be paramount to that of any human being in existence is attested by his assertion that he was different to other men ; morality—political, social, or otherwise—and the everyday principles of life were, he declared, very well for ordinary mortals, but could not be aptly applied to him. Viewing them in reference to himself, to his mind they conveyed no meaning except in the abstract. Scruples he set aside, conscience he discarded, and set himself above humanity. Had he been religious, would he have debased the Pope, degraded him in the eyes of the world, stripped him of all

temporal power and cast him into abject captivity? He truly remarked that had he been religious he could never have achieved what he did—and this is undoubtedly true.

Yet the composition of this perplexing human problem is not wholly devoid of superstition akin to Deism; for what motive is it that prompts him on the ship *L'Orient*, during his journey to Egypt, to designate to the savants who accompanied him the star-strewn firmament of night, and ask, "But, Messieurs, who made all that?" in refutation of their assertion that all is matter, and of the non-existence of a Divine Ruler, if it be not a conviction in him of the presence of an All-provident Being?

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Of all Napoleon's astounding undertakings, both of a civil and military character, this Eastern expedition in many respects takes precedence as being so full of striking contrasts and dramatic effect, where we see the diverse phases of his refulgent mind in full play, bril-

liantly illumined by the light of his originality.

The marvellous facility with which he assimilates his intensely modern and practical individuality with the languor of the elusive Orient is as remarkable as the ingenuity and diversity of his complex nature.

At one time he discourses with the Muftis or Imâms of Cairo with a fervency that would have done credit to an Eastern zealot; at another he announces himself and his followers to be faithful Mohammedans, for he says, addressing the Egyptians, "Are we not true Moslems? Is it not we that overthrew the Pope and destroyed the Knights of Malta, who bade Christendom wage war against you?" Then he stands in the light of a liberator—had he not come to deliver them from the oppression of the detested Mameluke?

By similar promulgations he endeavoured (on the whole with remarkable success) to reconcile the Egyptians to the foreign invasion. The grandilo-

quence of their wording illustrates how fully he appreciated the impressionable temperament of the Oriental, so prone to be influenced by a display of personal or rhetorical extravagance and susceptible to whatever has a proclivity to stimulate the imagination.

As a prelude to the battle which he is about to wage at the foot of the Pyramids against the chivalry of the East, he infuses additional enthusiasm into his legions with the stirring but somewhat dramatic address, "Soldiers, from the summit of these ancient monuments forty centuries look down upon you"—words well befitting the situation and circumstances, and calculated to appeal effectively to the highest ideals of a heroic soldiery, and impart to them a superabundance of militant animation.

Never did Napoleon's genius shine with a brighter lustre, in the midst of adversity, than during this sojourn in the East. The disaster of the Nile, where his fleet was all but annihilated, far from depressing his indomitable spirit, or reducing his

energy, only tended to accelerate the vigour of his resourceful mind and acted as a powerful lever to his inherent propensity for administration and invention.

Cut off from France and all intercourse with Europe, with the British fleet triumphant in the Mediterranean, he, with a soul serene and undaunted, turned his attention to the development of the arts of peace and progress, to husbandry, science, astronomy, and to topographical surveys of the country, the Delta and the Nile. The archæological wonders of Memphis now met for the first time the profane gaze of Western civilisation. Corn, rice, and the vine were cultivated, bakeries, foundries, and workshops were constructed, and buildings erected for the manufacture of gunpowder. These manifold undertakings were carried out with a celerity rarely if ever equalled, considering the scanty resources at his disposal. Perceiving the great swiftness and power of endurance of the camel and its natural immunity from the rigorous heat

of the climate, he, with his innate propensity for improvement, innovated a special camel corps, attached to his army —the first corps of its kind in Egypt —principally for the purpose of harassing the enemy in the open desert and the transmission of intelligence. Last, but not least, he founded at Cairo the Institute of Egypt, a society composed of physicists, with Monge as president, whose aim was the propounding and advancement of scientific knowledge.

Thus Egypt, under his enlightened and vigorous rule, saw herself emancipated from the trammels of semi-barbarism that for centuries had kept her former intellectual splendour in subjection, and beheld in him the restorer of her most glorious era (when she centred in herself the learning and culture of civilisation*), resuscitated, as it were, from an age of

* During the reign of the Ptolemies, especially the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who built the museum and founded the Library of Alexandria and encouraged literature.

ignorance, and henceforth to be distinguished as the Renaissance in Egypt.

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Egypt, after Napoleon's exit, relapsed into a state of lethargy, from which she was not to be roused until the genius of Mehemet Ali once more drew upon her, self the attention of the world, recalling the exploits of a far rarer and brighter luminary.

BOOK III

NAPOLEON AND THE WEST

"I wished that the title of Frenchman should be the best and most desirable on earth, and that the French nation should be justly entitled 'The Great Nation.'"—*Napoleon.*

IN consequence of important tidings regarding the critical situation in France, the loss of Italy and the threatening attitude of a formidable coalition, Napoleon resolved, in the midst of these herculean toils, to leave the ambiguous Orient and return to the country of his adoption, now well-nigh distracted by civil dissension, his most cherished aspiration—an Empire rivalling that of Alexander, and extending from the solitudes of the Lybian desert to the sacred Ganges—having, from the day he raised the siege of Acre, proved but a chimera of the land of dreams.

So, in the summer of 1799, accompanied by Lannes, Murat, Duroc, and others of his devoted companions in arms, he embarks for Provence, propitious and promise-laden winds blowing this daring spirit over the "Midland

Sea" to the coast of Europe, which ere long he was to confound and subjugate.

Landing at Frejus, on the Provence coast, October 9, 1799, he is greeted there with every demonstration of enthusiasm as the conqueror of the East.

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Within the space of a month from the date of his touching French soil, he is absolute master of France.

* * * *

Once in Paris, in the vortex of political hysteria, with his characteristic daring and alacrity, he assails the Constitution—the Directory, at the auspicious moment, having in the interim, with consummate artifice, matured his plans for his elevation to supreme power.

Emulating the example set by Cromwell and backed by his coadjutors, his brother Lucien, Sieyès, Barras, and Ducos, he annuls or, to be more accurate, dispels, with his grenadiers, the Council of Five Hundred, assembled at St. Cloud, and shapes a new Government, drawn upon republican lines, the legislative

authority being vested in three magistrates or consuls, he subsequently taking precedence with the title of First Consul, with administrative prerogatives as entire as those of any dictator.

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We may here pause awhile to cast a retrospective glance upon the remarkable manner in which fortune or chance, or whatever it be, befriended Napoleon on his journey from Egypt, and to indicate how mightily an event, had it come to pass, would have affected the whole trend of modern thought.

This hypothetical event, that might as likely as not have been an accomplished fact, was his capture by the British in the Mediterranean. Had Nelson, after the battle of the Nile, kept in the proximity of Egypt instead of being lured to Naples and succumbing there to Circean wiles, and had Sir Sydney Smith not been detained at Cyprus, whither he betook himself to refit, the history of the last hundred years would have had a different significance. The intellect of manhood

would not have been dazed by such a rapid succession of extraordinary events, the modern world would never have known such overbearing military might, nor could it have conceived the art of war carried to such a pitch of colossal extravagance. The nations of Europe would never have been welded into a conglomeration of vassal states with him as suzerain, nor would we have witnessed the unprecedented sight of one man dictating to a continent with all its potentates from the Straits of Messina and Gibraltar to the Niemen ancillary to his will.

The unity of Germany and Italy would undoubtedly have been deferred to a much later date but for his wars that kindled, in the former country more especially, the flame of patriotism, that amalgamated all Germans in a common cause—the liberation of the Fatherland.

Many a feudal law valid then in Europe might be in vogue to this day but for his Code that enlarged the horizon of legislative administration, yielding an ampler

scope for the diffusion of a more rational system of legal dispensation.

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But for the vicissitudes of life and the frailty of human nature, the advancement of mankind would assuredly have been deferred by at least ten decades, for it is preposterous to imagine a mental force as cogent as Napoleon's, as his substitute, assuming he had never existed.

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During Napoleon's absence in Egypt Italy had been lost to France, the allies under Suwarrow having driven the French from all his recent conquests, Massena, invested in Genoa, alone presenting a defiant attitude to the victors. He found the army demoralised—the results of his late achievements entirely undone.

With his advent, however, the whole position is transformed into one of triumphal sublimity. The Alps are no longer Nature's insurmountable barriers, but a high-road leading the French to glory and conquest.

The breast of every Gallic warrior

throbs in unison, a pulsation born of the fire of martial frenzy as they behold their mighty leader, like Mars incarnate, guiding them over the mountain desolations to gather fresh laurels, to bedeck their battle-furrowed brows in fields consecrated by the blood of heroes, their former companions in glory.

By his victory at Marengo Napoleon reconquers the whole of Italy. Although not to be compared, as far as the number of combatants is concerned, with his other gigantic victories, still, in its abiding results, Marengo was perhaps the most potent of all his mighty triumphs, its effects lasting thirteen years. It is moreover distinguishable as being the only great victory he all but lost, that closed with signal success and brought him the longest term of peace.

The plan of this campaign is the most daring, not to say original, in the annals of modern warfare, its strategy the most subtle. The audacity of attacking the enemy from the declivities of the Alps, the impregnable bulwarks of Italy, is as

amazing as the master-mind that conceived it. The undertaking was strenuous to a degree and taxed the endurance of his heroic army to the utmost. The artillery, cavalry, and ammunition were conveyed over the wilderness of ice and snow and the dizzy brink of precipices, with a celerity that seems to pertain rather to the domain of legendary lore than to the solemn reality of authentic history.

Some writers are inclined to reckon Hannibal's passage of the Alps as a greater feat than that performed by the consular army of France that culminated in Marengo, and ascribe to it a greater share of glory, their plea in favour of the Carthaginians being that they were harassed on their march by hostile tribes of Gauls and encumbered by elephants. Albeit our last design is to depreciate the mighty exploit of the greatest military genius of antiquity, nevertheless, the achievement executed by the French army in 1800, if it does not surpass, certainly equals that of the Carthaginian hero. Despite the casualties among his

soldiers, the difficulties to Hannibal's march over Mount Genèvre (presuming this to have been the route taken by him in his invasion of Italy) were not so immeasurably greater than those which Bonaparte had to contend against in his passage of the Great Saint Bernard, as some writers postulate. In any case a comparison between Hannibal's achievement and Bonaparte's, performed 2,000 years later, seems absonant—a just one impossible. Both exploits were marvellous feats which only such men as these were capable of executing—both equally extraordinary for their respective ages.

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The peace of Luneville, that followed Marengo, gave Napoleon leisure to concern himself with the internal affairs of France. We now see him applying his vigorous intellect to questions concerning the Church, its re-establishment in France, and the renewal of salutatory understandings with the Holy See. It is highly improbable that the Concordat was the product of feelings of a religious

nature in him, but rather the outcrop of legislative ideas compatible with the welfare and domestic stability of France. The Organic Articles which he subsequently affixed as a corollary to the Concordat, without sanction from the Pontiff, sufficiently prove how little he dreaded the prerogatives of the Court of Rome and how drastic were his measures towards the liberties of the clergy.

Whatever Napoleon's shortcomings may have been—and we fear he was as far removed from impeccancy as the rest of humanity (was he not after all but mortal like ordinary men?)—dissimulation in religious matters can scarcely be reckoned as a failing of his. There is no instance in the whole course of his career in which he admitted holding religious convictions, whereas there are many which prove that his views were anything but consistent with dogmatical faith. He who had reopened the churches in France, restored to her her ancient religion, and by the Concordat brought France once more in touch with the Holy See, might well be

supposed to harbour strong feelings of religion, but from the outset Napoleon never attempted to dissemble his opinions with regard to spiritual matters as he might well have done had he been a hypocrite, for at Malmaison (Josephine's beautiful country seat near Rueil), at the time when the Concordat was but newly instituted, he averred to Volney the Orientalist and others, during a discussion on the ecclesiastical concerns of France, that he believed not in Christianity, that in re-establishing the Church in France he acted not so much in conformity with his own wishes as with those of the French people. If this be not candour, what then is? Had he wished to pose as a good Catholic, as a sincere Christian, to simulate a belief negative in him, surely nothing would have been easier. The motives that incited him in re-establishing the Church in France were purely of a political nature. He no doubt deemed that a religion of some sort was more compatible with legislative stability than the irreverent doctrine of the Revolution, and therefore chose the

Roman Catholic faith as the religion of France, in preference to the Protestant, as being in the first place her pristine faith, and secondly less subject to sectarian dissensions than the Protestant, and in consequence the more readily controlled by the ruling will, namely, his will. Even had he attempted, after the Concordat, the rôle of hypocrite, had he succeeded (as he undoubtedly would have) in hoodwinking the world as to his esoterical beliefs, had he abstained from his subsequent repressive measures towards the Apostolic See, it would have been difficult even then, nay, impossible, to reconcile the extortioner of the Pontiff's millions, the promulgator of the Papal downfall to Islamism, with the tenets of Popery, or those of any form of Christianity, for that matter.

Although, in moments of dejection, Napoleon frequently condemned his pact with the Holy See—to wit, the institution of the Concordat, which really meant regret for the revival of Christianity in France—he nevertheless held religion to

be so essential to her welfare, that at Saint Helena he asserted that religion was such a necessity to France that had there been no Pope, one ought to have been created if only for the sake of the Concordat. Strange, incomprehensible being! The thing he rejected as regarded himself he yet deemed of vital moment to the interests of mankind. Still more, he could even appreciate the full significance of religion in connection with others. The tolling of the church bells of Rueil moved his imperturbable soul deeply. If this call to divine worship could so affect him, how much more, he declared, would it not appeal to the truly devout?

His objurgations to his generals for their atheistic views and irrelevancy in regard to religion and his remarks in its support are not to be taken as interpretations to his real beliefs, but rather as the disguise they assumed for the maintenance of his political designs, for religious in its literal sense Napoleon certainly was not. That he possessed a certain undefinable con-

ception of the existence of a supreme intelligence we have already seen, but on the whole we are inclined to opine that his convictions leant towards materialism, for at Saint Helena (if reliability can be placed in Gourgaud's statements) he emphatically declares himself a believer in this doctrine. It is only there, during his agony of soul exanimate, unmasked at last, that we are enabled to render anything like an approximate estimate of his incomprehensible nature. That he ever altered his views we cannot for an instant entertain, and we decline to charge such a temperament with inconstancy. The little we know of his inscrutable mental composition has been gleaned mainly from his incidental conversational outbursts in Saint Helena. Let us therefore take these as a basis for a judgment, superficial at the best, of the man's entity in the hour of tribulation and during his career of unequalled splendour.

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The liberality of Napoleon's all-providing genius is forcibly characterised by his

formation of an Order for military and civil merit—the Legion of Honour, thereby inciting the abilities of the civil classes as well as those of the military, and consequently widening the range of human capability and stimulating its aspirations.

Education likewise received the impress of his strenuous pesonality and benefited largely from his organising genius, although its centralisation in the University of France, and the military-like system of its administration, were undoubtedly hurtful to a thorough development of primordial talent, that, after all, only fructifies fully in an atmosphere of entire freedom.

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We have already alluded to the Code, that colossal monument of legal ramifications and its beneficent influence to Germany. How arduous was its adjustment from a chaotic mass of legal tangle into a practical instrument of law may be imagined, when we take into account that besides State administration it embraced family, matrimonial and divorce regula-

tions, and division of property. It was adopted by Italy in 1806, and subsequently, in part, by several of the South American States. Napoleon instituted it in Holland and North Germany; its influence has been felt in Prussia, Central and Southern Germany, Switzerland, and Spain. This stupendous legal fabric shows the magnitude of the area of Napoleon's mental comprehension and his astonishing grasp of administrative detail.

On August 1, 1802, Napoleon is appointed Consul for life. How universal was his popularity and firm his hold on the imagination of the French people is amply substantiated by the overwhelming majority of votes in favour of his life tenure of the Consulship.

The Consulship for life foreshadowed the splendour of the empire that was to emulate, in the modern age, that of Charlemagne. Proclaimed Emperor, he places with his own hands the Imperial crown, which he had won with his invincible sword, upon his brow. Shortly

afterwards, in the cathedral of Milan, he crowns himself King of Italy with the iron circlet of the Lombard kings. Thus, we behold him, who ten years previous was unknown to fame, the ruler of an empire almost as vast as that of the Carlovingian hero.

A few observations in connection with the rites attending Napoleon's coronation may perchance enucleate his motives for an apparent ostentatious exhibition of exuberant magnificence at the ceremony that some writers attribute to an immodest spirit of audacious effrontery, actuated from the instincts of the vulgarian, but which, to those who have attempted the analysis of his occult character, would seem to pertain rather to his boundless ambition and to a yearning that ever goaded him into accomplishing deeds unsurpassed in magnitude in former and perhaps future ages. His enjoinment to the Pontiff to repair to Paris to lend additional solemnity by his presence to the functions of his coronation, was a procedure instigated more from a sense

to accomplish an historical precedent and to demonstrate to the world a pre-eminence that even surpassed that of Charlemagne, than from motives emanating from the intuitions of the parvenu or tumid vulgarity.

His injunction to Pius VII. to attend his coronation, and the presence of the Head of the Catholic Church in Paris, on a mission derogatory to the confirmed principles of the Holy See—a mission preternatural in history—and his supercilious demeanour towards the Pontiff in repudiating from his hands the diadem of the West, thus disdaining the prerogatives of the Church in such observances, was a manifestation that besides his hankering to outstrip all past renown, he likewise disowned, as far as his own person was concerned, the spiritual control wielded heretofore by the successors of St. Peter, placing the Church in subservience to his ambition and glory.

BOOK IV

NAPOLEON AND EUROPE

"With 800,000 men I can oblige all Europe to do my bidding."—*Napoleon to Fouché.*

THE autumn and winter of 1805 are signalised in history as having witnessed possibly the most brilliant and rapid military evolutions to be recorded in the annals of modern warfare. A mighty coalition is stricken down by the death-dealing blow of Austerlitz, that likewise presaged the dissolution of the remnants of the Holy Roman Empire; the proud House of Austria lies prostrate at Napoleon's feet; the arrogant host of the Czar is hurled back discomfited into Russia; and the whole of Germany submits to the dictates of the modern Cæsar. This succession of stupendous events was accomplished within the amazingly short space of less than three months! With his magnificent army, that from Boulogne had cast its ominous war cloud upon the coast of Britain, Napoleon marches with incredible celerity against the enemy and deals the first staggering blow at Ulm,

one day before the disaster of Trafalgar, which, however, is completely eclipsed by his overwhelming triumph in Moravia, he becoming thereby arbiter of Europe, a state of pre-eminence never (at least in modern history) until then attained by mortal. Was ever rise to dizzy heights of power as astounding and bewildering as his, or a preponderance of mental vigour equal to that which was concentrated in the mind of this prodigious enigma of the human race? Eleven short years sufficed to raise him from comparative obscurity and indigence to an apotheosis of power and supremacy which is without a parallel throughout the whole course of modern history.

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Within this same space of time Napoleon's physical conformation underwent as remarkable a transition as that which took place in his destiny, whose star now soared resplendent in its ever-ascending course towards its zenith.

From a spareness of build that almost verged upon atrophy—for which he was

remarkable in early youth as we know him throughout his glorious Italian campaign, and as he is delineated in our conception of him even after Marengo—his figure had now assumed more ample proportions, which in after-life developed into a state of plethora; but the beauty of the face, Cæsarean in semblance, except for a greater fulness, scarcely underwent any change. The clear-cut features, as though chiselled in marble, were the same. To the expression of almost superhuman energy was added one of intense thought. The unreadable grey eyes, piercing withal, were full of the melancholy of insatiable desire, that lent an additional interest to the grandeur of the countenance. The forehead, lofty and smooth as a sphere, seemed the receptacle of the intellectual virility of a world. Such was the aspect (crudely as it is here portrayed), nigh the meridian of his marvellous career, of the world's greatest human phenomenon.

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By the treaty of Presburg, ratified

something over three weeks after Austerlitz, Napoleon raised the Electors of Bavaria and Würtemberg to the dignity of kings. To his kingdom of Italy he joined Venice, Istria, and Dalmatia. The Tyrol and Vorarlberg were transferred to Bavaria. Baden, sublimated to a grand duchy, was enriched by a part of Swabia, the remainder being apportioned between Bavaria and Würtemberg. Finally, by a secret article, Austria was forced to pay a war indemnity of £5,600,000 to France. By a separate treaty, signed at Vienna, Prussia gained Hanover as a compensation for the loss of Anspach and Bareuth. In the ensuing year the Emperor Francis II. resigned his sovereignty over Germany, restricting himself to his Austrian dominions. North and South Germany were now erected by Bonaparte into a confederation of states, designated the Confederation of the Rhine, under his suzerainty. Thus vanished for ever the crumbling edifice that whilom constituted the Holy Roman Empire, and thus was the power of Fortune's "favourite

child" consolidated over the whole of Germany.

Early in 1806, Naples fell under Napoleon's power. In the autumn of the preceding year an Anglo-Russian force landed at Naples, meeting with a cordial welcome from Ferdinand and Caroline. This breach of neutrality on the part of the king and his consort cost them their crown. To chastise the royal delinquents, Joseph Bonaparte invaded Naples. Ferdinand and Caroline escaped to Palermo, and the allied troops re-embarked for Malta and Corfu. The conquest of Naples was a light matter. Joseph, master of the entire kingdom, was now proclaimed King of Naples by a decree of Napoleon. Thus ceased to reign the Neapolitan house of Bourbon for having incurred the reprobation of the Suzerain Lord of Europe.

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High as the star of Napoleon's fortune had soared, and dazzlingly as it shone, it was yet to mount to a still higher alti-

tude, and coruscate with even greater brilliancy.

On October 14, 1806, he annihilates the Prussian army, the pride of the nation, near Jena, and vanquished Prussia lies crushed and bleeding, seemingly unto death, beneath the wheels of his car of conquest. Erfurt, Spandau, Madgeburg, and every fortress in the hapless kingdom open their gates to the victor.

On October 27th, at the head of his chosen veterans, surrounded by a brilliant retinue, Napoleon enters Berlin in triumph. The gaze of the vast multitude that witnessed his entry into the capital was intently fixed upon the mighty conqueror. To it the victor of Jena must have appeared invested in the glory of his innumerable victories.

What the sentiments of the Great Captain were, as he passed through the spell-bound throng, like the embodiment of Fate, is impossible to conjecture. Was his imperturbable soul elated by his overwhelming triumph over Teutonic force, or did he accept it with the equanimity of the

fatalist as coinciding with the even march of his destiny?

It was during Napoleon's sojourn at Berlin that he hurled his anathema against Britain in the form of the Berlin Decrees, issued at Berlin, November 21, 1806, prelusory to the Continental System, that eventually enforced the closure of every port on the Continent of Europe from St. Petersburg to Cattaro against English commerce. Was an interdiction throughout the annals of history to be compared to this prodigious erection of formidable hostility? That mortal ever had it in his power to band the energies and resources of the civilised world, and marshal its entire battalions under his banner in the interests of his ambition, seems the hallucination of the wildest phantasy, and makes his greatness appear scarcely human in its illimitable immensity.

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Napoleon's campaign in Poland in many instances bears a marked similarity to his Oriental expedition, inasmuch as here he is dealing with a people not merely of

Oriental stock, but with national characteristics more consistent with the East than the West, and acted forcibly upon their imagination as previously he operated upon the impressibility of the Egyptians. The Poles received the Overlord of Europe with every evidence of enthusiasm, not devoid, however, of an element of awe, begotten from hopes of independence at his hands, and addressed him in terms of fanatical adulation, verging upon veneration, as the restorer of their national enfranchisement, more in keeping with the grandiloquence of Oriental than of Western phraseology.

Despite his ambiguous answers to deputations relative to Polish independence, he kept the hope of ultimate deliverance from a hated bondage alive by counselling the Poles to prove themselves in the interim deserving of independence, that perchance their hopes would be consummated in the near future. Meanwhile he drafted into his ranks numbers of Poland's bravest sons, their valour subsequently being amply displayed in

many a well-contested battle waged in the interests of his glory. True, they saw, later on, the dim reflection of a resuscitated Poland in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, under the rule, if not of one of their nationality, at least of that of a friendly sovereign (a descendant of one of their former kings), Frederick Augustus, King of Saxony. Beyond this mere shadow of independence their prowess brought them little else. As in Egypt, his addresses and promulgations were designed to engage the sympathy of the Poles in his projects and subsequent enterprises. Whether he entertained restoring Polish independence at some future date is open to conjecture. A powerful state beyond the Oder, at the threshold of Russia, imbued with feelings of gratitude for its benefactor would, in all probability, have assured his power in Eastern Europe and later, in 1812, helped to stem the Russian advance and seriously weakened the coalition of the nations.

A tinge of the Orient was cast over this campaign by the interchange of diplomatic relations between the Conqueror of Europe and the Persian Court. A special embassy from the Shah repaired to the beautiful castle of Finkenstein, contiguous to the Vistula, when, after the stubborn fight of Eylau, the Great Captain spent the spring of 1807 in negotiating upon the momentous question that had now become an idiosyncrasy with him, that ever haunted him, whose baneful influence subsequently lured him on to the holocaust of Moscow—the conquest of India.

Even now, nearly 1,000 miles from Paris, after fighting one of the most murderous battles in modern history against an enemy, although technically beaten, still formidable and full of undiminished tenacity, Napoleon's thoughts ranged far from his immediate base of action to that remote peninsula of gem-like cities, glittering pagodas and enchanted groves, the Mecca of conquerors—India, whose conquest was the quintessence of his unquenchable ambition.

The projects devised at Finkenstein resulted in paving the way to a prospective alliance between Napoleon and the Shah. General Gardane, accompanied by a number of officers, was despatched to the East to inspect the most direct route from the Levant to Delhi, subsequently to examine the harbours on the Persian seaboard, and further commissioned to betake himself to Teheran to concert with the Persian Court the preliminary conditions for the levying of an army, to be joined later by French contingents, for the vast project, commensurate with his ambition —the invasion of India.

Such an enterprise to one of less genius and self-reliance would have seemed more than quixotic, more like the extravagance of a madman's dream ; but to Napoleon, who had drained the cup of unremitted success to the very fæces, before whose ever victorious march and irresistible onslaughts the mightiest empires had swayed to their very base, to him this Utopian dream seemed entirely feasible and offered no apparent obstacle to his

authoritative and imperious will. These vast designs, however, were never to be consummated, the smoke-soiled walls of Moscow and winter's besetting snows relegating them to the region of vain dreams and frustrated hopes.

Napoleon's tenacity is made obvious in this campaign, the completeness of his tremendous victories up to Eylau allowing no exigency for a display of his irrepressible pertinacity. At Eylau he defied the grim precursor of defeat and gained the battle by sheer strength of will; he won it by a mere margin, his indomitable determination barely saving it from being a drawn battle, or maybe something more calamitous. If his tenacity was unbounded at the battle, it was unrivalled after. Few generals sweltering from the stunning blows of a contest so costly in human blood and so sterile in results, would have had the daring to hold to their positions and maintain an attitude of such bold defiance and self-possession as he after Eylau. When one takes into account the immense distance that severed

him from his main supports, France, his tenacity seems the audacity of wanton recklessness, and certainly equals, if it does not surpass, that of Frederick the Great, who, at no time of his fluctuating military career, found himself so far removed from his main resources. True, the great Corsican had to all purposes the whole of Europe at his beck and call, and the manhood of a continent to draw upon to fill up the wide breaches inflicted upon his ranks on the snow-covered plain of Eylau, whereas the resources available to Frederick at the best were, in comparison, paltry and insignificant. Yet, however great be the disparity that exists between these two great sons of Mars with regard to the proportion of their respective resources, the tenacity of the victor of Eylau is not thereby invalidated one iota. From a pinnacle whose footing was still precarious, he, with unruffled brow and a front of adamant, hurled a challenge at the confounded and awe-struck world that was not, however, accepted until the ensuing summer, when

Friedland's far-echoing guns and the Alle's rufescent waters vindicated his daring attitude after Eylau and a continent remained to him as the spoil of victory.

Friedland placed Napoleon on a pinnacle of unbounded power heretofore never reached by mortal since Cæsar's time. If his power was stupendous after Austerlitz, it was well-nigh complete after Friedland, for in truth he was now master of the civilised world. Germany, Prussia, Austria, and Italy he had conquered. Spain was but a puppet in his hand, and the Colossus of the East, if not reduced to Prussia's and Austria's low estate, that were suppliant at his feet, had now been brought to bay and compelled to accede to his conditions. Few victories have been so fraught with dazzling results or opened such a vista of usurpatory expansiveness, so replete with allurements for human possibilities. True, its results were but transient if compared with those of Philippi or Tours or Leipzig, yet it is doubtful if any victory has at any time

bequeathed to any one such an excess of individual ascendancy over the destinies of mankind. Marengo and Austerlitz, if viewed from a strictly ulterior standpoint, were perhaps greater victories, but the immediate results of Friedland were indisputably more sweeping and world-embracing; his heel was now firm set on the neck of Europe, and his formidable structure, the Continental System, erected for Britain's commercial ruin, was ere long to begird nearly the entire Continent. The completion of this prodigious dam, raised to stem the influx of British trade into the Continent, was made possible by the treaty of Tilsit, the crowning result of Friedland—the main rivet to his preponderant power in Europe.

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Tilsit! This word alone expresses in its fullest significance victory, aspirations fulfilled, labour's aims attained, and world dominion.

On a raft rocked by the waters of the Niemen, upon whose banks the town of Tilsit stands, the Conqueror and Alexan-

der I., Czar of All the Russias, met, with every outward evidence of amity, to treat upon projects touching the future destiny of Europe. The conferences that ensued were held in a neutralised part of Tilsit. The victor of Friedland, with an imperiousness begot from an elevation of power scarce conceivable, laid down the law that for five years stupefied the intellect and paralysed the energies of mankind. Alexander, dazzled and completely overruled by Napoleon's genius, was fain to comply with his terms; an alliance, offensive and defensive, between the Empires of the West and East, the recognition by the Czar of Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain, Jerome of Westphalia, and Louis of Holland, the creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and the enforcement of the Continental System throughout the Czar's dominions (in the event of Britain's refusal to accept Russia's mediation), being the fundamental articles of the treaty, ratified July 7, 1807. England having refused to negotiate, the Czar on the 8th of November

of the same year adopted the Continental System.

The creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, erected as a buffer state between the Empires of the West and East, carved out of the Polish provinces acquired by Prussia in the partitions of 1793–5 and conferred upon Frederick Augustus, King of Saxony, who after Jena had been raised by Bonaparte to the dignity of king, stimulated the chivalric spirit of the Poles in his cause. This modicum of independence, equivocal as it was, being a promise of eventual complete autonomy, no wonder the Poles greeted Tilsit as the luminary of the dawn of a revived independence and viewed Napoleon in the light of a liberator.

Such a power as Napoleon now wielded bewilders the mind. When we consider that fifteen years antecedently the name of him who now dictated to Europe, whose word was law to kings, was unknown to the world, the rapidity of his rise to the topmost pinnacle of

fame and pre-eminence astounds the intellect. Reviewing his career up to Tilsit, we first behold the lean, uncouth, keen-featured youth, in garrison at Valence, becoming General of Artillery, then, at an age when few have as yet obtained their captaincy, General in Chief of the army of Italy. From general and conqueror we see him ruler of France and controller of her destinies, and later Emperor of the West, Suzerain Lord of Europe. The phases of his extraordinary career follow one another in such rapid succession that the mind is perplexed thereby, their undeviating march towards a higher goal reminding us of the laws that regulate the principles of evolution. Had he been born in the purple with a kingdom as a heritage, his rise to such vast power, even then, would have appeared phenomenal, but he had to win his way from the first rung of the ladder, and had he accomplished naught else than dominating France, his genius would have been egregious. But when, in addition, we behold him, who erst-

while had been but a simple lieutenant in the regiment of *La Fère*, mastering a continent, bestowing kingdoms on his Paladins, and raising his kindred to the level of Europe's proudest dynasties, then his greatness is immeasurable and baffles the understanding.

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Napoleon's interview with Queen Louisa, at Tilsit, is of singular interest, as being the only occasion in his career in which a woman played a prominent rôle in the political upheaval of his era. For the first time the most virile intellect of modern times is in contact, on the stage of politics, with feminine arts and insinuations. That Napoleon vouchsafed the heart-stricken Queen an interview at all was an act of no small condescension on his part; that her prayers and obsecrations for the restitution of Magdeburg should have been made in vain, is not surprising, considering his rebuff to Madame de Staël and his depreciatory views of women in general. Was it not he who classified all women

promiscuously into one category and recognised no distinction among them? Besides, was it probable that he who would not cede one inch after the shambles of Eylau, or whose inexorability, later on, during the negotiations of Châtillon, united and victorious Europe could not shake, would yield to a woman's solicitations, or succumb to her beauty? With an Antony as auditor her pleadings might have met with better success, unfortunately for her and her stricken country, Bonaparte was moulded from firmer clay.

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Napoleon's mental vitality is truly astounding; his activity is ever at par and never flags. One would have thought after a campaign of nigh a year's duration, whose tide had surged from one extremity of Europe to the other, involving the destruction of Prussia and the defeat of Russia, that even his indefatigable spirit would have sought respite, if but for a spell, from the arduous strain of war. But, nay, this restless, overweening soul,

urged on by his inexorable resolution to bring about the destruction of Britain through the Continental System, must needs again embark in fresh and remote adventures. During his return journey from Tilsit he sends the Prince Regent of Portugal the alternative of joining the Continental System and seizing all British subjects and their property or the consequences of a war with him. To intimidate that kingdom he assembles an army corps at Bayonne, in readiness for eventualities. Although the Prince Regent acceded to all Napoleon's demands (save that regarding the apprehension of British subjects and the confiscation of their property) he declared war against Portugal and ordered an army, under the command of Junot, to march upon Lisbon. Spain being virtually a vassal of the Conqueror, was fain to join her legions to those of the invaders, which were advancing by forced marches through the northern provinces of Spain upon Portugal. Two days before the entry of the French into Lisbon the

Prince Regent, the Queen and Royal Household made good their escape on a British squadron to Brazil, abandoning the kingdom to the French.

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Napoleon's attention was next directed to the Pope. Pius VII. refusing to break with Britain by adopting the Continental System, he seized the Papal lands bordering upon the Adriatic, joining them to his kingdom of Italy. Napoleon's power in the Italian peninsula now extended from the Alps to the uttermost point of Calabria.

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The disorders of Spain and her distracted condition gave Napoleon a motive for interposing in the affairs of that unhappy land and ultimately of arrogating to himself the crown of Spain and the Indies. Already the north and west of the peninsula were in his grasp, large bodies of troops having crossed the Pyrenees, which, under the pretext of keeping communications open with Junot's forces in Portugal, had introduced them-

selves into nearly every important fortress of the north and west. The advance of Murat upon Madrid, and the report of a contemplated annexation of the northern provinces to France and the deposition of the Spanish Bourbons by Bonaparte, induced the Royal Household to prepare for flight to America, which was, however, frustrated by the sailing of a French squadron to Cadiz, to intercept them, and the *coup d'état* of Aranjuez, which terminated in the abdication of the aged king, Charles IV., in favour of his son Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias, who, disgusted with the shameful relations of the Queen, Maria Louisa of Naples, his mother, with her minion, the hated Godoy, the Prince of the Peace, had not merely connived at, but had been the prime instigator of, the insurrection of Aranjuez. The events that followed—the entry of Murat into Madrid, the wholesale abduction of the Royal Family to Bayonne, their subsequent banishment into ignominious exile, the surrender of the crown of Spain into the Conqueror's hands and

his nomination of his brother Joseph, then King of Naples, to the vacant throne —are for sordidness unique in history. Without the firing of a shot the Royal House of Spain and the Indies had ceased to reign. These arbitrary proceedings on Napoleon's part were unworthy of so rare a genius. As in everything he ever undertook, he here displayed consummate ability, tarnished, alas! by a duplicity and insidiousness hardly consistent with the majesty of his other bewildering exploits, alien to his bold, assertive nature.

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While on a journey in the north of Italy, towards the close of 1807, Napoleon issued the Milan Decrees, whereby any neutral vessel submitting to Britain's right of search or trading with her would be adjudged a lawful prize of war, this being a counterblast to the Orders in Council which prohibited the carriage by neutral vessels of hostile products, and pronounced all ports closed to British commerce to be in a state of blockade and treated accordingly.

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The Orient was like an alluring vision ever before Napoleon's eyes; to him as to an Oriental the East was his Keblah. By the conquest of India, conjoined with the Continental System, he hoped eventually to bring Britain to her knees. The subjugation of India meant to him not merely his most cherished hope realised, but, moreover, the death-blow to the only Power that as yet he had failed to conquer or humble, and that still presumed to defy him. The amicable feelings engendered between himself and Alexander I. at Tilsit had lost much of their primeval zeal by his emphatic refusal to withdraw his forces from Silesia until Alexander had reciprocally recalled his from the Danubian Provinces. The Autocrat of the East, taking umbrage at what he viewed as a menace, Bonaparte, to dispel the cloud that now dimmed their waning friendship, modified his attitude towards him and wrote him a letter full of dazzling allurements, wherein his proposal of a Franco-Russian expedition for an invasion of India was calculated to impress the

imaginative susceptibilities of the Muscovite ruler and memorise the concordant note of Tilsit. Despite the terrible wounds sustained at Austerlitz, which nearly three years had scarcely healed, and her crippled condition, Austria had secretly, but steadily, prepared her armaments for a desperate blow for liberty. This intelligence, combined with the miscarriage of his plans in Spain, the stubborn resistance of the Spaniards, who refused to acknowledge Joseph Bonaparte for their king, and which for the nonce demanded his urgent attention, made him desirous for a closer unity with the Czar. For this purpose, and to gain his assurance of checking Austria in any hostile move she might undertake against him while his hands were full with the Spanish imbroglio, he proposed a meeting between himself and Alexander for the guaranty of the latter's support in his Spanish projects and the holding of Austria in check.

Erfurt, the capital of Thuringia, was designated as the meeting-place between

the Emperors of the West and East. In this ancient city the destiny of nations was to be decided; there to receive the Suzerain Lord of Europe, to manifest their fealty to him, to lend additional exuberance to the scenic effect were his vassals the kings, princes, and margraves of the Rhenish Confederation in gorgeous galaxy. Of this brilliant constellation of crowned heads Napoleon was the cynosure, the irradiating point, the luminary round which they with their followers seemed to rotate, as the planets with their attendant satellites revolve around the sun. There in the blaze of the pageantry of Erfurt, in this parade of kings, where seventy independent princes waited attendance upon him, he was the pivot of the world's political system, its centre of gravity, so to speak, to whom all the pomp, all the intellect of humanity seemed irresistibly attracted.

Bonaparte took up his abode in the palace of Count d'Alberg, Prince Primate of the Confederation of the Rhine. The two Emperors, surrounded by a

glittering retinue, outwardly manifested as at Tilsit every evidence of friendship. Although to the superficial eye the sun of Erfurt shone with a splendour equal to that of Tilsit, although the chase, the theatre and receptions saw the two Emperors apparently united as formerly by the bonds of concord and good-will, yet to the keen observer a speck was discernible upon the luminary's disc which indicated that a discordant note has been struck in the air of Tilsit. Alexander was provoked that the conqueror still retained his hold upon Silesia, and regarded the occupation of the fortresses of Küstrim, Stettin, and Glogau, on the Oder, by French troops as a menace to the security of Russia; moreover, he emphatically refused to coerce Austria. This obdurate attitude towards his ally was emphasised by the prorogation of his Oriental projects, which, ever since the ecstatic days of Tilsit, had fired his imagination, the golden visions then opened to his gaze having so far proved but idle and illusory

dreams, Bonaparte assigning their execution to a future period when events should declare themselves mature for the carrying into effect of his own ambitious designs. In fact, the interviews between the two Emperors were vitiated by cavil and discord. On one occasion Bonaparte lost his temper at the Czar's pertinacious refusal to browbeat Austria, already sufficiently reduced in political estate. A display of anger in any being is an exhibition one would as lief not witness, for then even the most impotent of mortals is at his worst, in the most minacious, not to say formidable, phase which physically and mentally the human composition can assume. What, therefore, must have been the impression upon the senses of the most consummate of mental organisations the modern world has ever known, who even in his calmest moments inspired others with awe—the enslaver of Europe, the trampler of thrones, the extirpator of dynasties, the king of kings, mastered by the fury of ungovernable ire? Here Napoleon's im-

perious nature is revealed; he could not brook opposition to his inflexible will; his unintermitted triumphs over man were mainly responsible for this aversion to any but his own views. This exhibition of wrath failed to intimidate the inexorable Autocrat of the East or to ruffle his equanimity, and the utmost Bonaparte succeeded in exacting from him was a promise of his support against Austria in the event of his being attacked by that Power, and his recognition of Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain. On his side, Napoleon unwillingly consented to lower the war indemnity upon Prussia to £4,800,000, and allowed the Czar a free hand in Finland and the Danubian Provinces, with the stipulation, however, that the integrity of Turkey should remain intact, but, as a requital to Alexander for not acquiescing with his hostile designs against Austria, he contumaciously refused to withdraw his forces from the line of the Oder.

Such, in brief, were the results of the interview of Erfurt, which, for metaphy-

sical reasons and dramatic effect, stands conspicuous in the annals of history. Never before were the destinies of the human race so dependent upon the whim of a single human being. To the philosopher, psychologist, and alchemist this stage in Bonaparte's wondrous and inexplicable career will ever yield material of all-absorbing interest.

The influence of Napoleon's genius was not merely efficacious in a political sense, but moreover cast its hypnotic spell over the literary mind of Germany. Both Goethe and Wieland were completely captivated by the magic of mental faculties well-nigh superhuman in their intellectual energy. That Goethe, the most supreme intellect of the age next to Napoleon, should not merely have succumbed to his genius but tacitly believed in his moral, doctrinal, and remedial signification (remedial as far as Germany in particular was concerned) is a psychological coincidence, probably without a simile throughout the history of human nature. It may seem dissonant, nay, inconceivable, that a true

patriot, dwelling in the midst of his country's humiliation, who beheld it in the throes of agony and defeat, and witnessed its national spirit trodden down by the weight of exotic oppression, could for an instant contemplate the author thereof with a benign eye and yield irredeemably to his influence; but when in Goethe we behold not merely a prodigious intellect but furthermore one of the world's greatest poets, this inordinate infatuation seems more than paradoxical, so abstruse is it (at least from a superficial standpoint), and for that very reason is it of still more profound interest on account of its apparent inexplicability; for from one point of view this infatuation (after all, by what other appellation can this total submissiveness of mind to Bonaparte be called?) is undoubtedly inexplicable. It is difficult, nay, well-nigh impossible, to conceive the poetic temperament captivated by the personality of the suppressor of national spirit to the degree that Goethe was. It is not easy to picture a Dante, a Shelley, a Byron, a Keats, or any other

poet for that matter, passively accepting the obliteration of his country's national spirit as a philosophical, moral, and political necessity and inclining before the intellectual force of the oppressor; howbeit, from a psychological aspect, the influence that Bonaparte exercised over Goethe is sufficiently intelligible. Discerning further than most of his contemporaries, the great poet saw, prophet-like, the moral indispensableness to Germany of the Napoleonic *régime*, and was convinced of its seeming irresistibility and therefore resigned himself to the inevitable; and later the loud tocsin of the war of liberation, when an embattled world had risen against the erstwhile master of Europe, scarcely roused him from the quiescence of his literary meditations. Besides, there can be little doubt that the magnificence of the pageant of Erfurt must have impressed the wild imagination of the creator of "Faust" and strengthened his belief in the infallibility of the mighty Conqueror. Withal, allowance must be made for Bonaparte's extraordinary personal charm,

that entirely captivated whoever came in immediate contact with him. Even his bitterest enemies succumbed to the hypnotic power of his individuality. Alexander, at Tilsit (with sword still imbrued with the blood of Friedland), was completely overpowered by his genius, and even Englishmen felt its influence, Fox and Lord Holland, among others, yielding to its potent spell. The crew of the *Bellerophon*, that bore the subverter of empires to the horrors of an exile that has for ever sullied the page of England's glorious history, succumbed to the magnetic force of his personality. Would his sufferings on that desolate rock, circummured by the billows of the Southern Ocean, have been mollified had some of the wiseacres in the British Government come within the orbit of his strenuous personality?

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From the splendour of Erfurt, the sycophancy of kings, the adulation of poets, Napoleon marches southwards for the conquest of Spain, where the talis-

manic power of his presence alone could restore lustre to his eagles. With the exception of the defence of the Somosierra Pass, his advance through the rugged mountains of Navarre and Castile met with little opposition, the storming of this strong position, which defended the approach to Madrid, and Lannes' victory at Tudela being the only brilliant passage of arms in this campaign. At the storming of the Somosierra the Polish contingent in Napoleon's service contributed largely towards assuring the victory; supported by infantry and cavalry of the Guard, they carried the defile, driving the defenders in utter rout before them. On December 4, 1808, Madrid opened her gates to the Conqueror. The ardour with which the Poles fought and the reckless daring they displayed sufficiently emphasises their devotion to Napoleon, stimulated to the highest pitch by the hope that their superb heroism would ere long earn them their country's complete independence. Napoleon's procrastination with regard to the restitution

of Polish independence is strangely unintelligible. The independence of Poland might have, if not averted, at least greatly mitigated, the disastrous consequences of the Russian campaign of 1812, and perhaps protracted his fall indefinitely.

Decidedly the Fates seem to have been adverse to Napoleon as far as Britain was concerned, for if ever a chance of inflicting a crushing blow to British arms lay within his reach, it was during this campaign. Just when he seemed about overwhelming Sir John Moore (after a hot pursuit through Castile and Leon) at Astorga, serious news of the aggressive attitude of Austria made him relinquish the pursuit and hasten back to France to open the wonderful campaign of 1809, terminating in his second conquest of Austria. A victory over his most persistent and implacable enemy, invulnerable in her ocean realm, would have completed his crown of glory. He who had lorded it over so many nations, over Austrians, Turks, Italians, Prussians,

Spaniards, Poles, Swiss, Dutch, Germans, and Russians, was denied ever to triumph over Britons, for a reason obvious enough, forasmuch as (without reckoning the siege of Toulon) since his reverse at Acre he but once found himself face to face with the red coats—on the fatal field of Waterloo. However much Moore's escape must have galled Napoleon, he yet had the satisfaction of beholding for the first and only time a British army in full retreat before his ever victorious eagles.

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On April 11, 1809, Bonaparte left Paris to anticipate the Austrian onslaught in the plains of Bavaria. He reached the scene of hostilities in time to extricate his widely separated outposts from imminent peril, the Archduke Charles (his quondam opponent in Italy) having advanced in superior force and threatened the French positions extending from Ratisbon to the vicinage of Augsburg. By a series of masterly tactics Bonaparte brought his dispersed divisions together, and after defeating the Archduke

in several engagements completely overthrew him at Eckmühl; three weeks later Napoleon's headquarters were at Schoenbrunn.

These operations, ending in Napoleon's second occupation of Vienna, are among the most sublime in the history of warfare. Never was his genius as a strategist more brilliant or convincing. The celerity with which he executed those intricate evolutions culminating in Eckmühl is well-nigh incredible. In less than a month from the outbreak of hostilities by his superhuman genius he had cleared Southern Germany of the enemy and virtually reconquered Austria.

Before Austria's final overthrow at Wagram Napoleon's pertinacity was put to a severe test, and, but for his iron will, his star might not have set at Waterloo, and Moscow's flame vesture might not have been Europe's beacon of liberty, won over the bones of half a million of men. At Aspern and Essling he met with a check which, but for his indomitable tenacity and Austria's in-

explicable inertia, might have involved him in an irretrievable disaster, and maybe hastened the mighty tragedy of his titanic headlong fall.

How severe was the check Napoleon received on the Danube may be judged by the lapse of time intervening between his defeat (for defeated he unquestionably was) at Aspern and Essling and his mighty triumph on the plain of Wagram —an interval of six weeks—an eternity to this condenser of time, who in 1799 amalgamated, within the space of a month, the overthrow of the Directory and his elevation to the Consulship, who in the following year, in even less time, reconquered Italy in one campaign, and in 1806, at Jena, shattered the might of Prussia in a day—achievements each of which would have sufficed to accredit his name to the realm of immortality.

Aspern was Napoleon's first defeat in the open field during thirteen years of triumphs, Caldiero and Acre being eliminated, as the former can scarcely be called a defeat and the latter was not a battle

at all. He had not won twenty-five victories over nearly every nation of the Old World without having come to consider himself invincible, hence it is not surprising he refused to accept Aspern as a defeat or his compact with victory broken. This confidence in his "star," in his invulnerability, endued him with the apathy and arrogance, so to speak, of the subverter of empires, which, when confronted (as at Eylau and now at Aspern) by a task that demanded all his superhuman energies and resolution to overcome, evolved itself into undeterred, unflinching tenacity.

Napoleon's strategic genius has never been questioned; by nearly every one he is deemed the greatest exponent of the art of war in the modern world. In the grandeur of his military conceptions—in the astounding results of his overwhelming victories, in the vastness of the area of his evolutions (with perhaps the exception of Alexander), he is without an equal; yet, because of Leipzig, where he was outnumbered by two to one and,

moreover, betrayed—because of Waterloo, where he was in his decline, a foundering ship—his tenacity by some is held in depreciation. In the catastrophic results of these stupendous defeats they seem to ignore his self-control at Marengo, when all seemed lost—his dogged pertinacity at Eylau, where he was an ace from defeat —his undaunted attitude after Aspern, where he was actually defeated—his irrepressible resolution to attain his goal after the butchery of Borodino—his illusory hopes amidst the flames of immolated Moscow—his persistency after such barren victories as Lutzen, Bautzen, and Dresden —his suicidal obduracy during the negotiations of Chatillon—his sisyphean, yet glorious struggle in 1814 against the coalesced armies of embattled Europe. Leipzig, terrible as were its consequences, did not deter him from defying the retributive host of the Allies advancing to overwhelm him, and even Waterloo failed to reduce his intrepidity; for on his return to Paris, after the fatal June 18, 1815, he was still full of confidence as

to the final issue, and without doubt, had France stood by him at that crucial hour, would have struck a last blow to retrieve his lost supremacy.

Napoleon's position after Aspern was yet more critical than after Eylau; not only was he defeated, but his prestige was at stake. Aspern revived the hopes of agonising Europe; at last Napoleon was found to be vulnerable like ordinary mortals—any wonder he mustered up the sum total of his resolution for a telling blow, and under the ægis of his "star" felt confident of the final issue? Meanwhile the terrible losses in his ranks, sustained at Aspern, were made good by reinforcements drawn from France, Germany, and Italy, so that before long the Conqueror, with forces numerically superior to those of the enemy, was ready to deal the blow that was to close this memorable campaign. By means of bridges of boats his whole army crossed from the island of Lobau (where he had retired after Aspern) to the left bank of the Danube, outflanking the Austrian

earthworks. The crossing was effected in safety in the early morning of July 5, 1805, despite a storm that premonished the titanic struggle waged on the following day under the spires of Vienna. On July 6th the fate of the Austrian Empire, of Europe, was confirmed at Wagram, and Napoleon's supremacy over the Continent reasserted. For the ensuing three years Europe endured the incubus of his colossal power. Had Austria taken full advantage of her opportunity, of Napoleon's precarious situation after Aspern, had she evinced some of his indomitable resolution, and had he been imbued with less, the world might have been spared the desolating wars of 1812–13–14–15. This, in many respects the most glorious of Napoleon's immortal campaigns, affords an admirable opportunity for an analysis of his marvellous endowments in the science of war. Here all the phases consonant with military genius in its most transcendent form—daring initiative, mathematical precision, celerity, remorseless tenacity—are saliently dis-

played, pervaded by a solemn majesty that invests this campaign with an interest that holds the mind enthralled. This interest is attributable to two reasons: Firstly, Napoleon was now in his prime, and had all but reached the culminating point, the apex of his power; his military genius was at its solstice. The operations that preceded the battle of Eckmühl were in his opinion the most dexterous of his incomparable military career (could any one be more competent to judge of his own achievements than he?). Secondly, this is the last campaign terminating auspiciously for himself—the last of that succession of world-subduing wars, the last in which Fortune kept true to him. Thenceforth she abandoned her favourite for ever, and all his succeeding wars, despite his superhuman efforts and unimpaired genius, closed as fatally as his previous ones had proved overwhelmingly successful.

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The following incident, which occurred at Vienna, three months after Wagram,

attests that Bonaparte was not the pitiless monster that his detractors assert him to have been. But for the vigilance of two of his devoted lieutenants his career might have been closed when his star was virtually at its zenith. A youth, Friedrich Stapps by name, son of a pastor of Erfurt, had charged himself with the task of emancipating Europe from the thraldom of the Conqueror; in short, he resolved to assassinate Napoleon at Schoenbrunn. To accomplish this purpose he endeavoured to obtain an interview with Bonaparte, ostensibly to read him a petition. The eagerness he evinced to attain his end aroused the suspicions of Rapp and Berthier, who had him arrested. Upon being searched a knife, with which he intended committing the crime, was found upon his person. Brought before Napoleon, Stapps calmly declared his intention —that in ridding the world of such a tyrant he was serving both Europe and his country's cause. This candour, far from hardening Napoleon's heart, tended rather to imbue it with mercy and com-

miseration for one so young. He offered the youth his liberty, but Stapps' reiterated asseveration that nothing would shake him from his purpose, not even liberty, led him to his doom—he was executed October 17, 1809. Incompatible as it may seem, the executioner of the Duke D'Enghien, of Palm, of Hofer, could yet entertain feelings of compassion towards his would-be assassin. Far better for Bonaparte had he died at this juncture, though by the fanatic's steel, than live to endure the ignominy and anguish of St. Helena. And yet, who would really wish this? By how much would not history have been the poorer had Stapps' blade found its intended victim; for, in his world-submerging fall, Napoleon's greatness looms forth with a majesty that invests the closing scene of his wondrous career with a soul-moving interest not met with in any other epoch of authentic history.

The treaty of Schoenbrunn, that deprived Austria of 45,000 square miles of territory, and nearly four millions of

people, closed the war of 1809, and was signed at Schoenbrunn, October 14th of the same year. By this treaty Austria ceded to the Confederation of the Rhine Salzburg and part of Upper Austria; to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, Cracow and Western Galicia; to Russia part of Eastern Galicia; to the French Empire Trieste, Carniola, Friuli, and parts of Dalmatia and Croatia, which (subsequently enlarged by the addition of Ragusa, Istria, and Cattaro) together now formed the Illyrian Provinces. The Tyrol was apportioned between Bavaria, the Illyrian Provinces, and the kingdom of Italy; besides she recognised Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain, agreed to pay an indemnity of £3,400,000, reduced her army to 150,000 men, and guaranteed to exclude all British products. Crushing as these conditions were, those Bonaparte imposed upon Prussia at Tilsit were yet more intolerable. If he tore from Austria some of her fairest provinces, he practically dislimbed Prussia; if he taxed Austria with an indemnity of £3,400,000,

he ground Prussia down with one of close upon £5,000,000; if he cut down Austria's army to 150,000 men, he reduced Frederick's proud legions to 42,000 men. Moreover, every fortress in the Prussian monarchy had been converted into a French garrison. The terms Napoleon meted out to Austria at Schoenbrunn were, short of absolute conquest, as galling as any ever prescribed by victor to vanquished. In the case of Prussia entire conquest would have been immeasurably more merciful, and yet the fact that Napoleon conceded to Prussia and Austria their independence, that he spared them from annihilation—that he granted the Houses of Brandenburg and Hapsburg even a valetudinarian reign—shows that, stupendous as his power was, he yet eschewed exerting it to its utmost limit; for, after Austerlitz, and again after Wagram, what could have precluded him from dethroning Francis II., or, after Tilsit, from overthrowing the unstable throne of Frederick's successor?

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That Napoleon was grasping and unprincipled (what conqueror in the true sense of the word can fail being this?) is undeniably true, but that he might easily have been considerably more so is equally true, and this fact has hardly ever been adduced by even unbiassed writers, for to nine-tenths of humanity Bonaparte is the acme of unlicensed rapacity and despotism —the very soul of all that is iniquitous. To them the conqueror of Italy, of Germany, of Austria, of Prussia, of Poland, of Spain, of Portugal, the suppressor of Dutch independence, the jailer of the Pope, the master of three-fourths of Europe, had in truth quaffed the cup of success to the very lees; what more could he desire? After his exactions in Italy, his pilfering of her national treasures, the massacre of Jaffa, his infamous treatment of Toussaint l'Ouverture, the execution of d'Enghien, of Palm, of Hofer, the imprisonment of the Pope, the proscription of the Royal Houses of Naples and Portugal, the deposition of the Spanish Bourbons, what further transgressions

could he well perpetrate? Yet arbitrary, nay, tyrannical, as many of Napoleon's measures were, he yet displayed a clemency which few in his exceptional position would have shown. It must be borne in mind that in Napoleon we are not dealing with an Antoninus Pius or a Louis IX., but with the greatest of military geniuses, the greatest of conquerors, with one such as Alexander and Cæsar were, not necessarily a bad man for being a conqueror, but one whose very title of conqueror exposes him to the revilement and condemnation of many; and yet history has not condemned Alexander or Cæsar because they were great conquerors, and for aught we know to the contrary they may have been greater sinners than Napoleon; one does not attain to the dominion of the world by following the precepts of a saint. Alexander, Cæsar, Alaric, Attila, Theodoric, if not vicious, were at all events not what would be designated as virtuous men. With all his piety, was not Charlemagne the oppressor of the Saxons? If the misdeeds

of these great human prodigies seem still fresh to us, despite the ages that separate us from them—if the murder of Clitus, the imprisonment of Callisthenes, still tarnish Alexander's fame ; if the murder of Odoacer, the execution of Boethius and Symmachus still cast a shadow over Theodoric's greatness, if the butchery of Verden be still a stigma upon Charlemagne's glory, how much more must the massacre of Jaffa, the execution of D'Enghein, of Palm, of Hofer (the occurrences of but yesterday) rankle in our hearts !

Although we are not endeavouring to minimise Napoleon's inordinate ambition, yet it is a remarkable fact, and indeed a paradox, that in none of his wars, with the exception of the Spanish, and perhaps the Russian war of 1812, was he, the mightiest of all conquerors, really the aggressor. Even those who cannot find a single good point in Napoleon's character, who have endeavoured to sully his memory with the blackest accusations, who have charged him with the turpitudes of a Tiberius, of a Nero, of a Borgia,

must own this. In the Austerlitz campaign it was Russia and Austria, bribed by English gold, that were the aggressors. In the Jena campaign it was Prussia that first declared war. Napoleon entered upon the Polish war to repel the advancing Russians, the champions of stricken Prussia. In the campaign of Wagram it was Austria that again was the aggressor by invading Bavaria, a member of the Rhenish Confederation and therefore virtually a part of Napoleon's empire. In 1813–14–15 Napoleon had to fight against the banded world for his very existence. In his first Italian war of 1796–7 he was only executing the mandates of the Directory. The campaign of Marengo was really a war of restitution, for at Marengo Napoleon merely restored to France his conquests of three years anteriorly and reasserted her supremacy in Italy. Although so rarely the agressor, yet Napoleon took every advantage of his overwhelming successes, for every war extended the limits of his Empire, as it fired his ambition, until nothing seemed

insuperable to him, nothing beyond his possibilities. His whole career of conquest, his astounding exploits and superhuman efforts are succinctly summed up in his own words—"*Les circonstances en me suscitant des guerres m'ont fourni les moyens d'agrendir mon empire et je ne les ai pas negligé.*"

That Napoleon was despotic, that many of his measures were even tyrannical, is undoubtedly true, but at the same time, as Hazlitt puts it, his despotism was not a legitimate despotism transmitted from a generation of tyrants and sanctioned by all the laws of society and equity. Napoleon's despotism was not that of a Henry VIII., of a Charles V., or of a Louis XIV. Whereas Henry, Charles, and Louis wielded a despotism derived exclusively from the divine right of kings, that which Bonaparte exercised was an individual despotism exerted against the old dynastic institutions of Europe and vindicative of the rights of the people; for did he not spring from the people? Napoleon's name, instead of being execrated by the

great mass of humanity, should be blessed, for he is the avenger of humanity, the subverter of the arbitrary prerogatives of legitimate kingship. Napoleon is the greatest example of the complete triumph of the rights of the people over kingcraft that the world has yet seen. This man, who rose from nothing—this self-made king, despot that he was, tyrant that he was, stands forth as the champion of the unshackled freedom of the human will. At Marengo, at Austerlitz, at Jena, at Friedland, at Wagram, he fought (although unbeknown to himself) as much for the rights of the people as for his own glory and ambition. Napoleon's career is a testimony that life, even to the humblest of mankind, is not without hope. Bonaparte was not Emperor of France but Emperor of the French, he was the *people's* Emperor—they made him such; he was the man of their choice. This great king-maker made his kings out of clay. The crowns of Spain, Holland, and Westphalia he bestowed upon his brothers Joseph, Louis, and Jerome. Eugene

Beauharnais, his stepson, he made Viceroy of Italy. Murat, the inn-keeper's son, he sate upon the throne of Naples. He exalted the people, upon them he lavished titles, gifts, and honours. Fame and glory were within the reach of the meanest of his subjects; ability and bravery in the humblest subaltern were sufficient credentials to a marshal's bâton, a dukedom, or a principality—were not his marshals sprung from the people? His munificence was not restricted to the lowly but extended to the great, he even exalted the great—his German vassals, the Electors of Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Saxony he raised to the dignity of kings. That Napoleon ruled France with a grip of iron is true, but that he was a despot in the sense that Charles V. was a despot is false. He who calls the man who instituted the Code, who stamped down Romish bigotry, who gave all men, even the very humblest, equal rights, who threw open all the avenues of distinction to all men—he, we repeat, who calls this man who did all this a tyrant is a dolt. To call Napoleon a

usurper is fatuous; he had no hand in the overthrow of the Bourbons; when he entered the arena of events the crown of France was lying in the mire, the French people picked it out of the mire and placed it upon his brow, upon the head of him whose incomparable exploits had earned it for him. Napoleon was no more a usurper than were William III. or Bernadotte usurpers.

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Surely since Napoleon's advent the old order of things in Europe had been sufficiently convulsed, the world had been treated to sufficient surprises, and dumfounded, it beheld the work of centuries compressed within the space of little more than a decade. Since first he unsheathed his conquering sword in the plain of Piedmont, what mighty changes had metamorphosed the face of Europe! Venice, the former mistress of the Adriatic, is struck down by the victor of Ancola and Rivoli, never to rise again, and later to be incorporated in his kingdom of Italy—the chrysalis of Italian unity. The

Conqueror of Italy and the East becomes ruler of France, Emperor of the West, the Holy Roman Empire crumbles under the shock of Austerlitz, and out of its fragments the arbiter of Europe shapes an assemblage of states under his jurisdiction—the Confederation of the Rhine. Five states are raised to kingdoms—Bavaria, Würtemberg, Saxony, Holland, and Westphalia—the crowns of the last two being conferred upon his brothers Louis and Jerome, that of Holland upon Louis, of Westphalia upon Jerome. The Royal Houses of Spain, Portugal, and Naples are bereft of their thrones, which are assigned, the former to Joseph Bonaparte, the latter to Joachim Murat; the House of Braganza is driven from Portugal. On the Vistula the Grand Duchy of Warsaw suggests the future independence of Poland, and, to crown all, the Continental System encircles Europe from the shores of the Baltic to the Adriatic. Yet an event was to follow these that demonstrates how far Napoleon's ambition durst carry him. It was not enough that he had

trampled every state in Europe, humbled all her potentates, imprisoned the Royal House of Spain and the Indies, proscribed those of Portugal and Naples. The Holy See, that for centuries had proudly dictated to emperors and kings, was now to bow before his irresistible power. At Vienna, about two months before Wagram, Napoleon issued a decree declaring the temporal power of the Pope at an end, which annexed Rome, with the residue of the Papal States, to his Empire, constituting Rome the second city of France. In the following year Pius VII. was conveyed a prisoner to Savona, and later ostracised to Fontainebleau, where he spent the remaining two years of his captivity. Thus at one blow was the temporal power of the Pope expunged, to remain virtually in abeyance for the next five years, during which time one might well affirm that the Papacy had ceased to be. Never had the Court of Rome sunk so low. In the past its arrogance and perfidiousness had certainly brought upon itself many a condign

adversity. Had not John XII. been deposed by Otho the Great? Had not Leo IX. been defeated at Civitella by Robert Guiscard and kept in durance for nigh a year? Had not Gregory VII., the greatest of the Pontiffs, been besieged in the Castle of St. Angelo, in Rome itself, deposed by the Emperor Henry IV., and constrained to flee into exile? Had not Pascall II. been driven from Rome by the Emperor Henry V., never to enter her gates again? Had not Innocent II. fallen into the hands of Roger of Sicily? Had not John XXIII. abandoned Rome to the vengeance of Ladislaus of Naples? Had not Rome been taken by Charles VIII. of France and Alexander VI. been compelled to sue for peace? Had not Rome been sacked, her churches rifled, by Bourbon lansquenets, Clement VII. detained a captive for seven months and derided through the streets of the Eternal City? Yet, despite the many storms unloosed through its tumultuous history against the Vatican (the deposition of Pius VI. excepted), never had the Ponti-

fical throne been vacated till now (the vacancies that occurred in the Papal chair, from the death of Celestin IV. in 1241 to the election of Clement VI. in 1342 are not taken into account, as these interregnums were solely due to the disagreement among the Cardinals in the choice of a successor to the throne of St. Peter). True, in 1309 Rome was shorn of the Papal tribunal, the Apostolic seat having been transferred in that year to Avignon, continuing there for sixty-eight years, yet at Avignon the Pope was every whit as much Pope as though reigning in his legitimate allodium, the City of the Seven Hills. The anathemas hurled by Innocent IV., a fugitive at Lyons, were as virulent as any that ever fulminated from the walls of the Vatican.

It seems anomalous that he who had re-established the Church in France, the author of the Concordat, should have brought such detriment upon the head of him by whose hands he had been anointed Emperor of the West. Harsh though Napoleon's treatment of the Pope

may have been, we must bear in mind that in no wise can he ever have felt beholden to Pius VII., or to the Vatican for that matter, for at Paris the Pontiff officiated at his coronation more or less under duress, and it is very much to be doubted, had circumstances been otherwise than what they were, had the Pope been a free agent, if such acquiescence to Napoleon's mandates would have been manifested by the head of the Catholic world, if even the Concordat, with its stringent "Organic Articles," would have been accepted by the Romish hierarchy. Indeed, it was Pius' refusal to adopt the Continental System that led to Napoleon's seizure of his Adriatic provinces in 1808, to the ultimate annexation of Rome to the French Empire, and to his confinement at Fontainebleau.

The seizure of the Papal States and of Rome, the Pope's detention in France, were, after all, procedures not a jot more arbitrary than the invasion of Portugal, the conquest of Naples and Spain, the deposition of the House of Braganza and

of the Neapolitan Bourbons, or the guileful subversion of the Royal House of Spain. Napoleon's contempt for legitimate rights was supreme; he wished to be paramount throughout the length and breadth of Italy and in Rome above all; being master of so many realms, why should he not likewise be master of the cradle of dominion — the city of the Cæsars? Had the Grand Seignior ruled in Rome, he would have dethroned him with as little compunction as he did the Pope. The annexation of Rome to his Empire, therefore, was an event that indubitably would have come to pass irrespective of all the Popes that ever were.

The overthrow of the Papacy might as like enough have occurred thirteen years anteriorly, in 1796, when Bonaparte, covered with the glory of Montenotte, Mondevi, and Lodi, the road to Rome clear before him, was actually in possession of the Legations of Bologna and Ferrara. In the following year, at Tolentino, the papal sovereignty was only

spared by him at the cost to Rome of the formal cession of Avignon to France, the incorporation of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna, with the Cispadane Republic, and the indemnity of £1,500,000 to France, besides the surrender of innumerable works of art. In 1798, a few months before Napoleon's departure for the East, General Berthier, at the instigation of the Directory, took possession of Rome, and actually deposed Pius VI. That his successor reigned undisturbed during the first nine years of his pontificate is due to him who, now deeming Popedom a superfluity, enunciated its doom from the precincts of Schoenbrunn.

Were there no other proof to assure us whether Napoleon was religious or not, his treatment of the Pope alone would suffice to convince the most insensate that religious he can never have been. This inference is based, not so much upon the mere seizure of the Papal dominions or the subversion of the Pope's temporal sovereignty by him, as upon his personal treatment of the Pontiff and virtual extinc-

tion of his autocracy as a spiritual prince; for distinction between temporal and spiritual prerogatives is, we believe, within the discriminative range of even the most ardently religious. Charles V., the embodiment of bigotry, the avowed champion of Roman Catholicism, impassively beheld the pillage of Rome—ay, lifted not a hand in remonstrance—when the Pope fell into the clutch of the desecrators of her sacred temples; but this apathy emanated solely from feelings of malice against Clement for his presumption as a temporal ruler and his arbitrary designs in Italy. From purely invidious motives, therefore, did Charles suffer Rome's profanation. To chastise the Pope did he wage war against him, not to perpetrate his ruin or the spiritual downfall of the Papacy. Charles's zeal as the most devout of Catholic princes has not been besmirched because of his strife with Rome and venal exaction against Clement after his release, and he stands to-day (hypocrite though he was in many respects) as he stood then, the

most magnificent, the most implacable, and most potent upholder of the Romish prerogatives of sovereignty.

It is a paradox to see Charles V. in arms against the Vatican, of whose doctrines he was the mightiest prop the world has known outside the Pontifical hierarchy. However inconcinnous this may be, it is nevertheless equally true that Charles has a plausible pretext for his opposition to the papal power. Clement's sudden rupture with him, his league with France, England, and Venice, termed the Holy Alliance, formed against Charles, sufficiently justified the war that led to the loot of Rome and Clement's humiliation. Napoleon's conduct as regards the Papacy is, from one point of view, palpable enough; but from another somewhat equivocal. In one so unboundedly ambitious his annexation of Rome and the Papal States to his Empire, and his suppression of the Pope's temporal rule, is clearly comprehensible, but his arrest of Pius VII. and detention in France (which was really tantamount to the deletion of

the Pontiff's spiritual autocracy) was a procedure which, considering the impotence of the Pope, is not so patent and which evokes conjectures, yet at the same time conclusive as far as his religious convictions are concerned. Had Bonaparte lived in the days when the Pope's fiat was law to Christendom, had he professed any creed other than the Roman Catholic, there might be some palliation for his treatment of Pius VII.; but he lived in an age when the Romish hierarchy counted for naught in the councils of the nations. The days of Gregory VII., of Innocent III., of Boniface VIII., of Alexander Borgia, of Sixtus V., happily for mankind, were long past; the spirit that animated these oppressors of humanity had not been transmitted to Pius VII.; besides, whatever Napoleon's inner beliefs may have been, was he not, by the rules of formality at all events, a professed Roman Catholic? The Pope's imprisonment, therefore, seems a needless superfluity, for, once in possession of the Papal States of Rome, the Pontiff was in sooth

as much in his trammels as when in durance at Fontainebleau ; this being so, why did Napoleon depose Pius VII.? Was it indeed his intention to do away with the Papacy? Be this as it may, yet if the Papacy had not ceased to exist *de facto*, to the world it was to all practical purposes as good as extinct. To the true Catholic what was Rome without the papal tribunal? That superb city shorn of the triple crown meant as much to the Roman Catholic world as would Mecca to the Mohammedan despoiled of the Caaba. Had Napoleon been a good Catholic, had he been even moderately religious, would he have so outraged the feelings of the adherents of the Roman Catholic faith as to appropriate to himself the heritage of the successors of St. Peter and constitute himself the custodian of Christ's Vicegerent on earth?

After the treaty of Schoenbrunn (with the exception of the Spanish Peninsula) the Continent lay inert at the feet of Napoleon ; surely now was the time to quash the Spanish resistance and drive

the red-coats into the sea! Had Napoleon marched into Spain at the head of his seasoned troops, the veterans of Eckmühl and Wagram, had he in person consummated the work interrupted by the war of 1809, in lieu of entrusting the military operations in Spain to his disunited generals, the roll of British glory would not have been swelled by the victories of Busaco, Fuentes d'Onoro, Barossa, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, Vittoria, and Toulouse, and Lisbon might have been the scene of an event recalling what occurred at Corunna on the night of January 16, 1809.

It seems incredible that two years—two years of incessant warfare—should have elapsed without Napoleon once setting foot upon Spanish soil. This abstention from the scene of operations is all the more extraordinary as his armies, commanded by some of his most competent generals, Massena being of the number, had suffered a succession of crushing defeats. There is little doubt that Napoleon underrated both the

national movement in Spain and the generalship of the British commanders, Wellington not excepted, which accounts for his optimism as regarded the final result of the war, and his inordinate reliance on the efficiency of his subordinates to cope with the situation. He can hardly be blamed for his poor opinion of the military capacity of his enemies when compared with his unrivalled mastery of the science of war. Whoever had ventured so far to cross swords with him had, all in turn, succumbed to his superior genius; hence his contempt for the *Sepoy General* (as he disdainfully dubbed Wellington) is not to be wondered at; yet, however much he may have despised the military skill of the "Iron Duke," his blind confidence in his marshals to eventually succeed in clearing the Peninsula of the British was, in the face of events, both misplaced and unwarranted. He must have seen that where such a strategist as Massena had failed, his presence was indispensable. Had he, instead of recalling Massena,

joined him on the Portuguese frontier, after the latter's defeat at Fuentes d'Onoro, the operations in the Peninsula would have assumed a very different character.

The events that transpired from the treaty of Schoenbrunn to the close of 1810, Napoleon's divorce of Josephine and marriage with Maria-Louisa, his annexation of Holland, the Hans Towns, Oldenburg, and Hanoverian sea-board, and the consolidation of the Continental System, were certainly of sufficient weight to detain him in France ; but therefrom to the close of 1811 there was naught to justify his non-appearance beyond the Pyrenees. During this time no events occurred outside Spain that deserved as much of his attention as did those that were then transpiring on the border of Spain and Portugal, although it is true that his relations with Russia during 1811 were anything but amicable, and indeed in the summer of that year they well-nigh reached a climax. Yet, despite even the ominous clouds that then loomed

darkly on his Eastern horizon, he can hardly be exonerated for his apparent laxity with respect to the state of affairs south of the Ebro. Indeed, the storm that was fast brewing beyond the Niemen should have been, if anything, an incitement to him to bring affairs in the Peninsula to a prompt conclusion.

We therefore affirm that Napoleon should have repaired to Spain after Massena's defeat at Fuentes d'Onoro to support that brilliant soldier, instead of superseding him by the incapable Marmont. It would not have been too late then to reduce the Peninsula into submission. In three or four months—that is to say, by August or September of 1811—the Spanish uprising would doubtless have been whittled down into a mere guerilla warfare, and the floor of Spain and Portugal purged of the British.

It is improbable that Alexander would have availed himself of Napoleon's absence in Spain to attack him, even had Bonaparte not come to a compromise with

him regarding the two vital points of their dispute, namely, the deleterious effects of the Continental System to Russia and the expansion of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, for the very obvious reason that both Prussia and Austria being still in a hopeless condition and in consequence worthless as allies, the Muscovite was in no position to attack Napoleon single-handed.

Indeed, at one period, in the autumn of 1811, Bonaparte was almost upon the point of temporising with the Czar and of bringing their differences to some sort of a peaceful issue, the urgency of reducing the Spanish Peninsula to submission ere he embarked upon a war with his powerful Eastern neighbour being sufficiently patent to him, so much so, indeed, that in the beginning of 1812, upon hearing of the loss of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, he went so far as to approach the English Government regarding the affairs of the Peninsula, but England's emphatic refusal to recognise Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain brought the

negotiations to an abrupt termination. That these should have miscarried need surprise no one; a more unpropitious moment for an understanding with England could scarcely have been chosen, and that Napoleon should have entertained, particularly at such a juncture, even the slightest hope of an accommodation of any sort with England shows how little he understood the character of the English people. Did he expect, after Wellington's successes in the Peninsula, to find England more compliant, less obdurate, than she had heretofore been? Surely such a hope would have been irrational, fallacious, and opposed to common reason. As was only natural, her brilliant victories in Spain and Portugal tended to make her all the more exacting and untractable.

Russia, not England, was the power to treat with. Had Bonaparte pocketed his pride, so to speak, and negotiated with the Czar, had he given in on some of the crucial points of their dispute, it is more than probable that the war of 1812, if not

averted, would at any rate have been put off to a period more auspicious to himself, when the work of subjugating the Peninsula had been consummated. Had Napoleon so acted, it is not an exaggeration to say that the year 1813 might not have been that of his overthrow, for if his army in Saxony had been swelled by the forces that were then opposed to Wellington in the north of Spain, Dresden, without reckoning Lutzen and Bautzen, instead of being the Pyrrhic victory that it was, might have been a second Wagram, and the battle of Leipzig might then never have been fought. And be it remembered that without Leipzig there would have been no Waterloo.

* * * *

Undoubtedly, the Russian war of 1812 was a fatal mistake, nay, an act of sheer folly. To enter upon a war whose goal lay 1,500 miles away on the confines of civilisation, and that synchronised with the severe defeats of his marshals in the Peninsula by the Anglo-Spanish armies under Wellington, was, to say the least,

suicidal policy on Napoleon's part. But to Napoleon was this war a mistake, whose disastrous results he certainly could never have foreseen? If ever mortal felt fully assured of success, or was justly entitled in feeling so, it was Napoleon when he embarked upon this war with nearly the whole of Europe marching in his train. Such a display of military might as he was now prepared to hurl upon Russia had never yet been seen by the modern world. The mighty host, numbering over half a million of men, which he was about to lead into Russia, represented well-nigh the sum total of the embattled might of Christendom. In the summer of 1812 every legion between the Pyrenees, the Straits of Messina, and the Niemen was ranged under his banner in the grandest military pageant history has ever seen. Is it therefore surprising if, at the head of such a host, he felt invincible, felt himself, fatalist that he was, the controller of his own destiny? Moscow taken meant to him the destruction of Russia, Russia destroyed meant

the conquest of Asia. To drive the British into the sea, to reduce Spain and Portugal to submission, would then be but child's play; and from Moscow he would march upon India, like a second Alexander, there to effect the ruin of England. This may seem hyperbolic, but to Napoleon, who as yet (with the exception of his Syrian campaign) had never failed in any venture he had ever undertaken, all this seemed well within the purview of possibility. To him who in the course of nine short years had brought the greater part of Europe under his sway, who held all her kings in leash, the conquest of Russia must have seemed assured, her fate decreed—how could he fail to succeed—he, the lord of all the cohorts of Western, Southern, and Central Europe? There is no doubt that Napoleon reckoned upon bringing the Russian war to a triumphant conclusion by the autumn of 1812. The overthrow of Russia would have enabled him in the beginning of 1813 to consummate the conquest of Spain and Portugal, begun

nearly four years anteriorly. And then he could turn to the East, whose golden portals would be open to him, beyond which would stretch the road that would lead him to the conquest of India, to the conquest of England, for through India would he achieve her fall. But Bonaparte and the Fates were now no longer in accord—they ordained otherwise. Had Moscow not been sacrificed, unquestionably these dreams, bewildering in their extravagance, might have been fulfilled; a city's ruin sufficed to shatter them and overthrow the dreamer—her doom was essential to the deliverance of a world.

* * * *

To assert that Napoleon's conquests, that his stupendous wars, were inspired mainly on account of England, on account of his firm resolution to achieve her downfall through the Continent, is an erroneous assumption, but this does not imply that his conquests were not to a considerable extent provoked by his animosity towards Britain. Was not his Egyptian expedition in a measure a hit

point blank at England? Once master of Egypt, was he not in possession of the key to India? Were not the treaties of Tilsit and Schoenbrunn followed by the enforcement of his "System" throughout Europe? Was not Britain's very existence menaced, her doom promulgated to the world by the Berlin and Milan Decrees? It is certain, therefore, that his rancour towards his great enemy spurred him on his phlegethonic course of conquest, and doubtless his dream of ruining England through the Continental System tended to accelerate the ardour of his devouring ambition.

Indirectly the Russian war of 1812 originated really on account of England. Without the Continental System this disastrous war might never have been, Napoleon's "System" being mainly the cause of his breach with the Czar. However much Napoleon's wars may have been incited by his hatred of "perfidious Albion," it would be puerile to assert that he subjugated the Continent solely because of her. To affirm this would imply

that he conquered Europe, enslaved her, to achieve the ruin of one nation—a ridiculous hypothesis. Is it conceivable that but for England Napoleon would never have been numbered among the world's mightiest conquerors? Is it easy to conceive him, whose ambition perhaps even surpassed Alexander's, with aspirations limited to those of Hannibal? Yet some there are who restrict the splendour, the multifariousness, the diapason, the entire orbit, the whole purport of his life's epos within the narrow purlieu of a career of vengeance. Napoleon's views embraced a prospect infinitely vaster, by far more dazzling and seducing than the mere conquest of England, mighty and invincible as England was. From earliest manhood the realm of dominion stretched alluringly before him. The shades of his antecessors in glory, the heroes of past ages, were ever before his vision. The spirit to govern, to command to others, even in boyhood, was deeply radicated in his strenuous nature. He was born to rule, to prevail over mankind, to dictate

to the world was his birthright. Long before he hurled his gage of combat at the feet of Britain this had been made manifest. We see him in Italy, in the glory of his first conquests, winning his brilliant victories, creating states, ratifying treaties, organising Italy, not as the amenable lieutenant of France, but at his own initiative, as conqueror, as dictator of Italy. At Tolentino he humbles the Pope; at Campo Formio he brings Austria to terms, at a blow he overthrows Venice. Behold him, during the negotiations of Campo Formio, at the beautiful palace of Montebello, near Milan, surrounded by almost regal pomp! All the prerogatives of sovereignty are his. The festivities, the throng of obeisant courtiers and officials there portend the splendour of the pageants of Tilsit, of Erfurt, and Dresden. Then in the East he figures not merely as conqueror, but as Sultan, as supreme master of Egypt. The mastery of the East was of much greater moment to him than the ruin of England. To conquer India so as to dominate the

East was to him an infinitely more alluring dream than the conquest of India for the mere destruction of Britain. The suzerainty of the East he rated far above the conquest of Europe. Arbela, in his opinion, was an infinitely greater victory than Austerlitz. Had he taken Acre, he said, the whole face of the East, perhaps of the world, would have been changed. From Acre he would have followed Alexander's steps and founded an empire rivalling that of the Macedonian hero. Not till he had subjugated the East would he march upon the West, he would bring Europe under the tutelage of the East. This shows how infinite his views were and what an extraordinary hold the Orient had upon his imagination. As First Consul he is Suzerain Lord of the West. Surely it was not his enmity towards England that urged him to dominate France, to lord it over Italy, Switzerland, Spain, and Holland. To maintain that he waged the war of 1800, reconquered Italy at Marengo, to spite England, is both inconsistent and illogical.

Is it probable that, seeing the work that cost him fifteen pitched battles and the lives of thousands of his veterans, undone, his glorious conquests in Italy obliterated, he would suffer the banner of the Hapsburgs to flaunt for long in those very plains where erstwhile his eagles had triumphed?

That England was without the pale of his far-reaching designs, at the time when he attained to the Consulship at all events, is sufficiently obvious from his conciliatory letter to George III., dated December 25, 1799. Had England been the goal of his ambition, why, we ask, did he select her of all his enemies as the recipient of his noble proffer of friendship? We may likewise ask, why did England, who was always impugning against his aggressive policy, reject with contumely his generous offer of peace? No doubt the British Government may have had excellent reasons for spurning his proposal for a reconciliation, yet, however plausible these reasons may have been, some regard, we fancy, might have been evinced by the

British Government for Bonaparte's personal feelings, and Lord Grenville's answer to Talleyrand we think might have been couched in less offensive terms. Certainly the attitude of the British Government towards Napoleon was at no time conducive towards peace, and at the rupture of the Peace of Amiens it exhibited a spirit every whit as obdurate, if not more so, as his own. Although at the memorable interview between himself and Lord Wentworth, Bonaparte lost control of his temper, he yet, after England had thrown down her gauntlet in defiance, made a last effort at reconciliation and proposed Russia or Prussia as mediator between himself and England, but this last chance of staving off a resumption of the most calamitous war in modern history was perversely rejected by Britain. Therefore to affirm that Napoleon devastated the Continent because of his hatred of England, because of his determination to achieve her ruin, is erroneous. That he was more inimically disposed towards England than towards other nations is

equally false, but this does not imply that later he did not ardently desire her ruin. Had he not overthrown Austria, Prussia, and Spain, humbled Russia, conquered Italy and Germany and destroyed the Papal power? Were not all nations his prey and kings his quarry? Having enslaved all the nations of the Continent, why should England be exempted from falling under his yoke? Besides, was not England his greatest foe? Of all the nations was she not the only one who durst defy him? Had she not dealt him blows from which he practically never recovered? Had she not obliterated his navy at the Nile and at Trafalgar? Had she not robbed him of one of his fairest conquests —Egypt? Had she not despoiled him of Malta? Was she not the cause of the collapse of all his Oriental projects? Had she not dimmed the glory of his arms at Vimeiro, Talavera, Busaco, Fuentes d'Onoro, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Badajoz? Is it surprising, therefore, if he strained every nerve to achieve her ruin? And yet at Tilsit he was prepared to arrive at

an understanding with Britain and proposed the mediation of Russia, but here again his offer of a reconciliation was contumaciously refused by England. Again in 1808, at Erfurt, supported by the Czar, and early in 1812, as we have already seen, after the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, he renewed his tentative at an understanding with England, but, as at the time of his nomination to the Consulship, as at the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, and as at Tilsit, the British Cabinet yet again turned a deaf ear to his friendly overtures and peremptorily declined to treat with him as long as Joseph Bonaparte remained seated upon the throne of the Spanish Bourbons. To Napoleon, without a navy, England was beyond the reach of his cyclopean arm, that arm that had dealt such telling blows at every throne of the Continent. How was he to humble England, unassailable behind her ocean bulwarks? If he was impotent to compass her downfall by the strength of his irresistible arms, surely he could subdue her by dealing a fatal

blow at her commerce, hence the Continental System, the most prodigious and extravagant interdiction ever conceived by man.

It is therefore clear that the motives that urged Napoleon into subjugating the Continent emanated, not so much by reason of feelings of enmity towards any one nation more than another, as from the desire that grew in proportion as his power expanded, of attaining to universal dominion, for there is little doubt that ever since the dazzling days of Tilsit he aspired to the dictatorship of the world. Any one but Napoleon entertaining such a scheme—a project so utterly impossible, so extravagant and chimerical, would be looked upon as nothing less than a raving madman. But to Napoleon, to whom, so far, nothing had seemed insuperable, who probably of all mortals has attained the nearest to omnipotence, the mastery of the world cannot have seemed such an impossible achievement, for only two nations lay between himself and universal dominion — Russia and

England. With the conquest of the former Asia would be at his feet, the destruction of the latter would ensure him the empire of the seas, and then would not the world be his? That Napoleon aspired to universal dominion is attested by his own words when he declared to Fouché, on the eve of the Russian war of 1812, "The great power I have already attained forces me to assume a universal dictatorship. . . . There must be one code, one court of appeal, and one coinage for all Europe. Europe must form one great nation and Paris must be the capital of the world!" These words were not the vapourings of an idle visionary or of a besotted braggart, but revealed Napoleon's whole ulterior policy and the goal to which his unbridled ambition was impelling him. Can there be a scintilla of doubt as to the bent of his designs after such an utterance? It is well, perhaps, for mankind that Napoleon met his Nemesis at Moscow, for as it was, the weight of this one man upon the world was more

than it could well bear—was contrary to the laws of nature, and to the age he lived in. More power than he already possessed would have been monstrous, fatal to the intellectual progress of the human race.

That self-confidence is essential to success is undoubtedly true, and without this attribute few really great achievements have been accomplished, yet a plethora of self-confidence has often proved as fatal as a lack of it. A surfeit of self-sufficiency ruined Regulus. Rome was humbled at The Trebbia, Trasimene Lake, and Cannæ through the foolhardiness of her generals. Had Charles XII. been imbued with less assurance his quixotic career might not have closed at Poltava. Had Napoleon been less self-confident, or rather, had he postponed the Russian war of 1812 to a period more opportune to himself, in all probability his fall would have been relegated to a more posterior date. An incident that illustrates his self-confidence as well as the fatalistic tendency of his tempera-

ment is well worth recording. His uncle, Cardinal Fesh, viewing the Russian war of 1812 with the strongest disapprobation, endeavoured on the eve of the outbreak of hostilities to dissuade Napoleon from entering upon an enterprise which he deemed could only end in disaster, and which would be a just requital to Napoleon for his nefarious treatment of the Pope and the oppressive weight of his despotism upon the world. Napoleon's reply to this admonishment was in truth sufficiently laconic, not to say dramatic. Opening a window he pointed heavenwards, then turning to Fesh he said, "Do you see yonder star?" The Cardinal's reply being in the negative, "But I see it," answered Napoleon, and therewith dismissed the prelate. This episode, perhaps more than anything else, reveals the implicitness of Napoleon's confidence in himself — in his "star," and how deeply tinged with fatalism was his recondite nature. That a temperament so eminently practical and sceptical should be imbued with so much fatalism

seems strange enough, and yet the charm—nay, the fascination, should we not say?—of Napoleon's character is in a great measure due to this mental inconcinnity. As events transpired it would have been well, perhaps, for Napoleon had he taken the Cardinal's advice, and yet one cannot be surprised at his perverseness, considering that for thirteen years his word had been law to Europe. The dictator of kings, the controller of the world's destiny, was hardly likely to be influenced by the exhortations of a mere Churchman. Here the question may be asked, Did Napoleon believe *ipso facto* in his "star," or was he merely playing a part calculated to impose upon the gullibility of the world, and to intensify the enigma of his extraordinary entity? Was this belief in his "star" merely a pseudo-belief, not a belief at all—simply a bit of deceit, a bit of empiricism on the part of the most consummate of charlatans? The answer to this is, that although we do not for an instant suppose Napoleon believed lite-

rally in a "star" as affecting his destiny, yet, in a metaphorical sense, he certainly did, for the "star" he apostrophised he regarded as symbolical of his destiny, so that his answer to Fesh was in no wise either farcical or histrionic. Napoleon was no charlatan. In no sense of the word was he an impostor. With all his faults he was no hypocrite. Despite the complexity, the incomprehensibility of his nature, the actions of few great men have been more artless than his. Life was too short for him to fritter away in dissimulation and hypocrisy. Besides, his vast superiority over mankind and his contempt for the world in general immuned him, so to speak, from having recourse to the ordinary foibles of humanity. The man who refused to take the Sacrament because of his scepticism with regard to religion, and who, at the time of the enactment of the Concordat, openly declared his disbelief in the Divinity of Christ, was hardly likely to sink to the trickeries of a mountebank.

BOOK V

DRESDEN: THE ZENITH

"The excessive weight of this man in human destiny disturbed the equilibrium. This individual counted of himself alone, more than the universe besides. These plethoras of all human vitality concentrated in a single head, the world mounting to the brain of one man, would be fatal to civilisation if they should endure."—*Victor Hugo.*

WE now touch upon the most extraordinary period in Napoleon's momentous career, perhaps the most extraordinary throughout the whole course of human story, namely, the pageant of Dresden, when Napoleon's "star" had in truth reached its very zenith—when, during the latter half of May, 1812, surrounded by nearly every potentate of Europe, he posed as virtual Emperor of Europe—the highest pinnacle of human power which authentic history has to offer us. This passage in Bonaparte's epopœia reads more like a bit of the wildest extravagance of exaggerated romance than a historical truism, the nearest approach to this state of human pre-eminence being Alexander after Arbela and Cæsar after his victory at Munda—master of the Roman world, these two being the only great figures in

history that in any way can be compared with Napoleon, Cyrus being too remote a prodigy for comparison. Many names besides Napoleon's are symbolical of great power and supremacy over mankind —Alexander, Cæsar, Alaric, Attila, Theodoric, Charlemagne, Tamerlane, Charles V., are these. These great men—these Titans of history, all wielded abnormal power, but great as was their power and potential as was their influence over the destiny of the human race, Napoleon's was even greater and his influence over the world still more potential. Immense as Napoleon's empire was, and vast as was the range of his power, extending, as it did, from the Guadalquivir and the Niemen to the Straits of Messina, yet vaster still was the territorial range of empire of some of his great predecessors. Alexander's conquests, or rather his empire, stretched from the Ionian Sea and the Indus to the Nile. Cæsar's power embraced the entire Roman world, and stretched from the shores of Britain to the Ægean Sea. Tamerlane's con-

quests comprised that part of Asia that lies between the Mediterranean, the Caspian Sea, and the Ganges. Charles V., with his vast possessions in both North and South America, added to his extensive dominions in Europe, ruled over an empire immeasurably vaster than Napoleon's. Although in actual extent these empires may have exceeded that of Napoleon, yet the power which Bonaparte exercised over human destiny even surpassed that of Alexander, Cæsar, Tamerlane, or Charles V. Although we hardly expect a universal concurrence on this point, at least as far as Alexander and Cæsar are concerned, yet, if viewed in a certain light, this asseveration seems to us in no way hyperbolic. To be pre-eminent in the modern world—to be the exponent of the intellectual energy of the nineteenth century—to be the controller of the destiny of the neoteric epoch, seems to us a state of pre-eminence surpassingly greater than that of either Alexander or Cæsar in the archaic age, or of Tamerlane and Charles V. in the mediæval. Vast as

was the power which both Alexander and Cæsar wielded, it must be remembered that, with the exception of the Greeks and Romans, nearly every other people they had either conquered or defeated were little better than barbarians, and those that still boasted of a civilisation, as the Egyptians and Persians, were in truth effete — in a state of lassitude. What were the vast hordes that opposed Alexander at Issus and Arbela compared with the high civilisation and discipline of the Greek phalanxes? What were the Helvetii, the Gauls, the Britons, the Germanic tribes, the Egyptians, and even Pompey's coxcombs at Pharsalus, compared with Cæsar's legions? The difference between the Greeks and Romans and all other nations, the Persians and Egyptians not excepted, was as great as the difference that exists to-day between the energy and enterprise of Western nations and the languor of the Oriental. That Tamerlane's conquests were immense is undeniable, but his sphere of action, after

all, only extended over the decaying races of the Orient, the only nation worthy of his steel which he ever came in allision with being the Turks under the leadership of the redoubtable Bajazet I., whom he utterly defeated and took prisoner on the bloody field of Angora. As for Charles V., his power over the world was in no way to be compared with Napoleon's, a much smaller part of Europe being under his jurisdiction than under that of Napoleon. If the latter dominated Europe from Andalusia and Poland to Calabria, the former only lorded it over Spain, the two Sicilies, Franche Comté, Germany, and the Netherlands. The difference between Charles V. and Napoleon is that Charles inherited his extensive but incondite possessions and never owed a single province of his empire to his sword, whereas Napoleon attained to immeasurably greater power through his unrivalled genius in war. From nothingness, so to speak, unaided, except by the afflatus of his genius, he rose to the

bewildering height of Paramount Lord of Europe.

Human genius in its highest state of exultation, the highest point which man has ever attained through the intellect, is to be found in Napoleon at Dresden. There in the blaze of the assembled sovereigns of Christendom, from the dizzy summit of his power, he beheld the world suppliant at his feet. At Dresden, Napoleon was in very sooth the king of kings, for every crowned head, from the Carpathians to the Rhine, had congregated there to pay him homage as his vassals. The Emperor of Austria, the Kings of Prussia, Saxony, Naples, Würtemberg, and Westphalia, and a host of lesser satellites, were gathered there to obey the behest of the man who erstwhile had been but a mere subaltern in the French army and who now was the arbiter of the civilised world. That mortal ever rose to such an amazing height of power seems inconceivable, and had Bonaparte never existed, such a state of human

pre-eminence would never have been deemed possible, if even conceived. An altitude of power as bewildering as that which Napoleon attained has scarcely been devised by the most fantastic imagination. Even the wildest vagaries of Oriental fable or Western fairy lore have not endued their heroes with more power than Napoleon wielded. The genii of the Arabian Nights never conceded an iota of the supremacy to which he had reached. We fully agree with Whately in his affirmation that Napoleon's career is a miracle. We even go further than Whately and say that Napoleon is a miracle—the miracle of the modern age, if miracles there be. A study of his career seems almost to reconcile us, in spite of ourselves, to the miraculous.

Among all the giants of history, in one respect especially, Napoleon is unique. Most of the world's Titans were either the sons of kings or scions of royal houses, or lineally affined to illustrious families. Alexander was the son of Philip, King of Macedonia; Theodoric,

of Theodmir, King of the Ostrogoths; Charlemagne of the powerful Peppin, King of the Franks; Charles V. was the grandson of the Emperor Maximilian, and Ferdinand the Catholic, king of Spain. Hannibal was the son of Hamilcar Barca, next to himself the greatest of Carthage's soldiers. Cæsar was of patrician birth. Both Alaric and Attila were potent rulers before entering upon their careers of conquest. Moreover, with the exception of Hannibal, who died by suicide, in exile, and Charles V., who abdicated ultroneously when at the height of his renown, they all died in the meridian of their power and glory. But with Napoleon it was otherwise. His father, Charles Bonaparte, although of good birth and even of noble descent, was only an impecunious lawyer of Corsica, unknown outside his native isle, and but for his illustrious son, the name of Bonaparte would not be to this day the shibboleth of a dynasty. Therefore, Napoleon's greatness seems all the greater by the comparative obscurity of his origin,

which, when compared with that of the great predecessors, raises him, at least in our estimation, immeasurably above them all. He had to begin at the very root of things. If any one truly earned his spurs it was he. Everything from his first commission to his throne and bewildering altitude of power he owed solely to himself—to his matchless genius. Beholden to no one, he was his own debtor,—it was not without reason that he said, "I am the Rudolph of my race." Of all the world's greatest soldiers and conquerors only two—Cromwell and Bonaparte—rose from comparative obscurity to supremacy. Cæsar we eliminate, for strictly speaking obscurity of birth is hardly applicable to him. Alexander, Pyrrhus, Hannibal, Cæsar, Attila, Theodoric, Charlemagne, Tamerlane, Charles V., Charles XII., and Frederick the Great all enjoyed from the outset of their careers either great power or world reputations; therefore less credit is due to them for their great achievements than is due to Cromwell or Bonaparte for theirs. But for the acci-

dent of birth would these great men have left a name in history? Had they been of as humble birth as Cromwell or Bonaparte would their names, despite their latent genius, be remembered to this day? Who can say? for next to genius wealth and influence are the most potent auxiliaries to a great career.

In pairing Cromwell with Napoleon it is not because we esteem him to be, of all the world's great men, the most worthy to be compared with him, but because of the analogy between the careers of these two extraordinary men. In spite of Carlyle and his stilt comparison, we consider Napoleon to be in every respect an immeasurably greater genius than Cromwell. No doubt the latent greatness of Cromwell was vast, but after all it is not by what is latent in them but by what they have accomplished that men are appraised. Whatever Cromwell ever achieved, Napoleon accomplished and infinitely more besides. If Cromwell attained celebrity by his victories over the Royalists and thereby opened a high-

way for his ultmate ascension to supreme authority, Napoleon clove his way to the Consulship and the throne by the conquest of Italy and Egypt and the abasement of Austria. If Cromwell rose to the dictatorship of England and subdued Ireland and Scotland, Napoleon attained to the Consulship, the thrones of France and Italy, and the Suzerainty of Europe. If Cromwell won great victories, Marston Moor, Naseby, Dunbar, and Worcester, and triumphed in three separate realms—in England, Ireland, and Scotland, Napoleon won his stupendous triumphs—the Pyramids, Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, Wagram, Borodino, Dresden, broadcast between the Red Sea and the Baltic. If Cromwell was a great statesman, Napoleon was the legislator of half Europe —the author of the immortal Code. Great as Cromwell was, still we do not place him on the same pedestal with Alexander, Hannibal, or Cæsar, the three giants of the ancient world. Nor do we even match him with Charlemagne, the great luminary of Europe's darkest age;

for, presuming Cromwell to have been placed in circumstances similar to those of Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, or Charlemagne, we doubt if he would have accomplished as much as they. For all that it is questionable if these great men would even have been known by their contemporaries if born in the obscurity that surrounded Cromwell's birth. As a genius we rank Cromwell above Alaric, Theodoric, or even Charles V. and Frederick the Great, despite the fact that, with perhaps the exception of Frederick, these great men all attained to an immeasurably greater height of power than Cromwell. As a general Cromwell was every whit as great as, if not greater than, either Alaric or Theodoric. As a statesman he stands head and shoulders above them. In statecraft he was the equal of Charles V. and surpassed him infinitely as a general. If as a soldier he is a step below Frederick the Great, as a statesman he is unquestionably his peer.

The analogy between the careers of Cromwell and Bonaparte, up to a certain

point, is truly remarkable, but beyond this point it ceases. This analogy is as striking as the antithesis between the characters of these two extraordinary men. As regards parentage both Cromwell and Bonaparte were born in almost similar circumstances, the social status of the Cromwells being analogous to that of the Bonapartes, the latter, if anything, being perhaps of even nobler stock than the Cromwells. Both Cromwell and Bonaparte were the offsprings of a revolution which, in a measure, materially influenced their careers. Without the English Civil War there would have been no Cromwell; without the French Revolution there might have been no Napoleon. Both lived in a time of dissension and bloodshed made portentous by the execution of a king, a time in which the royal prerogative and every vestige of kingship was totally swept away by the frenzy of ultra-democratic principles. Both rose to the very pinnacle of absolute power—both controlled the destiny of two great republics. From the contemptible position to which

she had sunk, under the adynamic reign of the Stuarts, Cromwell raised England to the rank of the world's greatest powers. France sought her alliance and at sea she was victorious over Spain and Holland. From a state of political instability, France, under Napoleon's firm rule as first Consul, rose to be the paramount nation in Europe —the first power in the world. At this point the similitude between the careers of Cromwell and Bonaparte ceases. Up to the time when Napoleon arrogated the Imperial dignity this similitude is well-nigh perfect, but therefrom Cromwell's and Napoleon's careers are utterly at variance. Whereas the latter years of Cromwell's life were years of peace, unclouded by war, Napoleon's coronation predicted that long array of devastating, yet beneficial wars, under whose turgid cataclysm of blood the Continent lay submerged for the ensuing ten years. During this time, the period of Napoleon's greatest activity, which comprised his subjugation of the Continent and his stupendous overthrow there was hardly a country between

the Urals and the Straits of Gibraltar that he had not visited either in the capacity of conqueror or legislator. On the other hand, from the day Charles II. fled a fugitive before Cromwell's invincible Ironsides at Worcester, to his death, never once did Cromwell unsheath his sword—never once did he absent himself from England's narrow confines. Cromwell died in the fulness of power, leaving his son Richard the inheritor of his conquests. Napoleon died in the abysmal depths of despair—in the incessant tortures of captivity 4,000 miles from the scene of his bewildering, indelible exploits—on the derelict iron-bound rock of St. Helena—his earthly Sheol, whereto the coalesced world, upon which he had so long trampled, at last enchained him. Cromwell, as Lord Protector of the British Commonwealth, and Napoleon as First Consul of the French Republic, are perhaps the most remarkable paradoxes in modern history. Strange, indeed, is it to see the heads of two republics, erected over the Golgotha of royal authority, endued with legislative

prerogatives every jot as arbitrary as those of a Henry VIII. or a Louis XIV.

* * * *

Napoleon, at Dresden, during the latter half of May, 1812, is significative of the most exalted state which man has perhaps ever attained. There, in the very heart of Europe, with empires as a footstool—with a supplicating humanity inert at his feet, he was the manifestation of human might in its most stupendous and strenuous form. Despite the magnificence by which he was environed—despite the apparent inviolableness of his position at Dresden, there is something ominous in the very exuberance of his power, for, strange inconsistency of Fate, was not the pageant of Dresden predictive of his impending portentous fall? Who that saw him then with kings as his retainers would have foretold that five months later his knell of doom would be sounded at Moscow? It is well-nigh impossible to appreciate the full import of Napoleon's power at this period of his career; however, a glance in retrospection may,

perhaps, give us an idea of the prodigious power to which he had reached.

In the year 1795, seventeen years before the pageant of Dresden, there was living in Paris, in the greatest obscurity and straitened circumstances, a young man whose prospects seemed about as lugubrious as they could well be. By birth he was a Corsican, by calling an artillery officer, and despite his youth—he was only twenty-five years of age—had already distinguished himself in active service as a commandant of artillery. Having incurred the displeasure of the military authorities he had been obliged to resign his command and had come to Paris to solicit employment. An interview which he had with Aubry, the President of the Military Committee, had only conduced to render his position all the more desperate. Aubry, piqued at the young soldier's peremptory refusal to abandon the artillery and accept the command of a brigade of infantry in the Vandean War, caused his name to be struck off the register of general officers in employment.

Could any one's future offer a more hopeless prospect? His career, his hopes of future distinction (for his was an ardent, ambitious, even imaginative nature) seemed blighted for ever. That he had well-nigh succumbed to the stress of ill-fortune and thrown up the sponge in despair is clear enough, for, in his anguish of mind, he was on the verge of committing suicide and was only saved by the timely intervention of a friend. His ambition and day-dreams also seem to have degenerated with the accrescence of his adversities—to have sunk to the prosaic level of those of a *petit bourgeois*, for, with the resignation of a philosopher, he declared that life might be fairly tolerable if he could only afford to have a small house in the street where he lived, and to keep a cabriolet. The marriage of his elder brother with the daughter of a rich banker of Marseilles elicited from him a cry of reproof against the vagaries of fortune. Half in bitterness, half in pitying scorn would he often say, "How fortunate is that fool Joseph!" Yet, in

spite of the overwhelming weight of his misfortunes, he was not utterly resigned to his bitter lot. His inordinate ambition made him recalcitrate against the obduracy of his cruel fate and the banalities of his existence. Even the baleful clouds that darkened his life were lit up by the radiance of his vivid imagination. In this dismal hour of his life his thoughts turned longingly towards the East. If in France he was unable to obtain distinction, then he would hither to the East, and win his laurels there—the East which, to use his aphorism of later years, "only awaits a man." With the sanguineness of the dreamer he addressed a petition to the French Government, proposing that he, with a few artillery officers, be sent to Turkey to organise the Turkish artillery. For weeks the young commandant lived in the ferment of the wildest enthusiasm. The portals of renown seemed already open to him. We can picture him with his slim figure, pale, intelligent face and keen grey eyes, animated by the fire of enthusiasm, in his threadbare uniform,

dreaming over his future renown and glory. We can almost hear him as he says in a transport of exultation, "How strange it would be if a little Corsican soldier became King of Jerusalem!" This dream, which to him seemed replete with a glorious promise, was never to be, his petition to the French Government remaining unanswered. His bumper of woe seemed, in truth, filled to overflowing —the Fates as relentless as ever. Little did he guess what the future held in store for him, little did he dream of the splendour that awaited him beyond the sullen horizon of his life's purview! There, reserved for him, was a destiny incomparably more glorious than that of a Godfroi de Bouillon, than a Saladin or even of a Tamerlane. It was not the East, however, he was to dominate, but the West, there to found an empire that would eclipse that of Charles the Great.

Seventeen years have rolled by—seventeen years of incessant warfare. A supreme genius now bursts upon the world. Conqueror of Italy and the East,

he now controls the destiny of France. In his person is revived the Roman magisterial dignity of Consul, and as First Consul of the French Republic France is supreme in the West. Ere long we see France discarding the fasces of republicanism and assuming the Imperial Eagle and the insignia of autocracy. Her great dictator, invested with the Imperial dignity, is now Emperor of France, King of Italy, Lord of the West, and dictates to an empire whose confines stretch from the head-waters of the Tiber to the Zuider-Zee—an empire almost as extensive as that of Charlemagne. The floodgates of war now sunder open. From France's frontiers bursts with unbridled fury the angry tide of war. Before its mad onslaught empires and kingdoms are overthrown—thrones fall; dynasties are extirpated. From the débris of nations new kingdoms are created. The tricolour waves exultantly over every capital in Europe—over Vienna, Berlin, Warsaw, Lisbon, Madrid, Rome, Florence, Naples, Munich, Milan, Venice,

and Dresden. This tremendous upheaval in the political and social order of things is the work of a single individual. The Emperor of the West becomes Suzerain Lord of Europe, the subverter of dynasties, the creator of kings, the custodian of the Pope—the king of kings. At Austerlitz he dictates to an emperor; at Tilsit he remodels Europe, and his word is law to a continent, a king is his vassal, and the powerful autocrat of the East his sycophant; at Erfurt he is king of kings and at Dresden, the culminating point of his career, he is virtual Emperor of Europe. It is scarce conceivable that the man at Dresden in 1812, domineering over Europe and the obscure, impecunious young general of artillery, who seventeen years anteriorly, with blighted hopes, was a vagrant in Paris, were the same person—that the man of Dresden and the solitary denizen of the Rue Chanterine were both Napoleon —Napoleon at the zenith of his career and during the dismal hours of his youth. Has there ever been, throughout

the whole course of history, such a transformation as this in the career of any other human being?

If one considers the bewildering height of Napoleon's power at Dresden, and even before then, the rapidity of his rise to the topmost pinnacle of supremacy is truly astounding. From the day his "star" first shone forth in its nascent brilliancy over the heights of Montenotte to the day of Dresden, when at its very zenith it coruscated in all its lucent splendour, was an interval of but sixteen years, and yet within this brief space of time were concentrated the vicissitudes, the changes of centuries. Within this lapse of time the face of Europe, of the civilised world, was utterly metamorphosed. The pageant of Dresden was the guerdon of Herculean toil unremitted during sixteen years—the goal attained, the outcome of twenty-two triumphs and the overthrow of a continent. The supremacy which Alexander enjoyed at Babylon, the stupendous power which Cæsar wielded after his

triumph at Munda, was not acquired at so high a price as what it cost Napoleon to attain to the prodigious power with which he was invested at Dresden. Although it is true that Alexander destroyed the vast empire of Darius, yet what was Persia in her decadence, what were her undisciplined hordes compared with the superb valour and discipline of Alexander's legions? Cæsar no doubt met worthy foes at Ilerda, Pharsalus, Thapsos, and Munda, but it was not over prostrate empires that the great Roman Imperator attained to the dominion of the Roman World; for long before his advent Rome was supreme, all other nations were overshadowed by her greatness. No great empire stood between Cæsar and universal dominion. Undoubtedly Cæsar was a great conqueror, yet it was not by the overthrow of mighty empires that he earned his title as such. The various peoples he subdued in his Gallic war, with all their bravery, were nothing more than barbaric tribes, and this also applies to the Britons and the Germans. Egypt

was effete and in no wise a match against Roman might. Parnakes, the son of the redoubtable Mithridates, whom he defeated at Zela, was hardly a foe worthy of Roman steel. With regard to Napoleon it was very different. What was the political state of Europe at the close of the eighteenth century, when Bonaparte was winning his first laurels in Italy and the East? At that time there were four great Powers in Europe besides France—England, Austria, Prussia, and Russia. England, with her vast colonial empire ministering to her wealth, with her invincible navy sweeping the seas, was the emporium of the world. She was France's most redoubtable enemy. She had wrested Canada from her, driven the French from India, and but recently from Malta, and practically annihilated the French navy. Nelson had just inflicted a crushing blow on her navy at the battle of the Nile. During the war of the Austrian Succession the British navy, including frigates, galleys, and fire-ships, comprised 263 vessels, whereas

the naval power of France consisted of only 35 sail, and after Anson's victory off Cape Finisterre and Hawke's at Belleisle, the French navy was reduced to a single vessel. Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, Cape Finisterre, Belleisle, Quiberon Bay, Quebec, Dominica, Ushant were names that recalled events sufficiently recent to rankle in the hearts of patriotic Frenchmen. Austria was supreme in Central Europe. In the Netherlands and on the Rhine she had but recently been victorious over France. While Bonaparte, in Italy, was astounding the world by his innovations in the science of war, the Archduke Charles was victorious over Jourdan at Wetzlar and Wurzburg and in the valley of the Po; he contended with Bonaparte for the supremacy in Italy. Prussia had but recently been greatly enlarged by her share of dismembered Poland. She was basking in the glory of Frederick's victories. Less than fifty years ago had she not humbled France at Rosbach? She was still under the

spell of the glamour of that great day. She felt secure in her splendid army; and with just cause, for the Prussian army was reckoned perhaps the most perfectly disciplined army in the world. Russia, the colossal empire of Eastern Europe, was, next to France, perhaps the leading Power on the Continent of Europe. Her armies under Suwarrow, the greatest military genius of the time next to Napoleon, had triumphed over the Turks and the Poles. While Bonaparte was subjugating the Orient he extruded the French from Italy. The military skill of France's most able generals was of no avail against his superior genius. Moreau, the victor of Hohenlinden, Macdonald, and Joubert he defeated in three successive battles. Russia it was that really overthrew Napoleon; the charred walls of Moscow, the snow-clad plains of Lithuania effected more towards the liberation of Europe than the united armies of Christendom.

Such was the political state of Europe at the close of the eighteenth century

and at the dawn of the nineteenth, and these were the Powers Napoleon had to grapple with for the mastery of the world. Of the four great nations whose overthrow was essential for the gratification of his ambition England alone escaped the lion's claws. During nineteen years of incessant warfare she remained unscathed, invulnerable under the ægis of her invincible navy. In 1797 Austria was at Napoleon's mercy; in 1800 he ejected her from Italy; in 1805 she lay prostrate at his feet. In 1806 he annihilated Prussia and defeated Russia. In 1809, for the second time, he overthew Austria. The supremacy of Dresden, the suzerainty of Europe was the recompense of these stupendous achievements. The vast power which Napoleon enjoyed at Dresden is the greatest reward of human endeavour the world has to offer us, only acquired by exploits as astounding as those he achieved. No human power, short of universal dominion, could be greater than that which Napoleon exercised from 1810 to 1812, culminating in

the pageant of Dresden. Had he overthrown Russia in 1812 and conquered England without doubt the world would have been at his feet. It was at Dresden, at the hour of his greatest prosperity, that Fortune, his faithful handmaiden for sixteen years, forsook him. She could no longer meet his demands. To no other mortal had she ever conceded so much. The pageant of Dresden is the uttermost limit of human transcendence on record throughout the history of the human race.

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